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BLACKWOOD'S
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PEN OWEN

P E N O W E N

“WHY SO!—THIS GALLANT WILL COMMAND THE SUN”

NEW EDITION

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLXVIII

PEN OWEN.

CHAPTER I.

"HE must be a genius, Caleb!"

"*May* be—*may* be, brother Griffith."

"Must be, sir!"

"We are but weak, short-sighted mortals, Griffith; and must not"——

"Psha! speak for yourself, brother Caleb—the boy, I repeat, must be a genius."

"Well, well—if he must, he must; I can't help it."

"Help it! why"——

"Let him be any thing, my good brother, but one of your thing-o-my-alogists or ologists."

"Pooh, Caleb! you are ignorant of the use or application of terms."

"Like enow, like enow, Griffith; but I know his uncle Wintletrap was one of the crew, and you"——

"Hold, Caleb! Of me, you may think or speak as you shall see fit, in your plentiful lack of judgment; but of Doctor Wintletrap"——

"What of him?"

"He was indeed a philosopher."

"Didn't I say so? it's all one and same thing—a fellow"——

"Ay, Caleb, a fellow of every learned body, sect, and society, from Drontheim to Bologna."

"All of a kidney—all hang together, I dare swear; fellows like himself, kicked out of society at home, and sent packing to these outlandish parts!"

"Caleb, Caleb, thou art little better than an old dunce!"

"Dunce in your teeth—but no; I forgive you. I dare say you are quite right: you are more learned in these matters than I can pretend to be; but, for the soul of me, I never could understand their use."

"Use! psha, Caleb."

"I'm not saying it to anger you, brother Griffith—you know I am not; it's all my ignorance, no doubt; I am sure it is; but it was this plaguy Doctor Wintletrap who first set your wits a wool-gathering after these boxes of dead bones and painted porringers."

"Vases, vases, Caleb—Egyptian, Etruscan."

"Never mind their names, Griffith; I can't remember them. There they stand to speak for themselves; call 'em what ye will, they are still nothing but pots, pans, and coffins after all."

"Insufferable! why, that very mummy you are pointing at is three thousand years old."

"More the shame—more the shame, Griffith; what have you to do routing out men's rotten bones, and disturbing their ashes after Christian burial; ye're worse than the resurrection men."

"Blessed ignorance!"

"None of your taunts, Griffith, though I may bless my ignorance of such unnatural gimeracks. Why, what have you got by all these stuffed salamanders and pickled porpoises, I should like to know?"

"Got by them, thou worshipper of Plutus!"

"Brother, brother, I worship none but to whom worship is due; not a parcel of heathenish gods, who stand there and are valued only, as I heard that old fool Wintletrap tell you, like their neighbours the tea-pots, because they have lost their noses. Would you have me believe this is any thing but arrant nonsense? Why, they'd be all thrown together as rubble, and not fetch a shilling a waggon-load in the market."

"Market!—your eternal criterion."

"My what, Griffith?"

"Poh!—money getting."

"Better than money losing or money squandering. Why, the Lord protect you, my good brother, I'll be bound to turn a thousand pound upon 'Change, whilst you philosophers, as ye call yourselves, are haggling about a green halfpenny, (Heaven defend me!) or scrambling like schoolboys for a great black beetle!"

"MY SCARAB, by all that's sacred! why, thou SOLOMON."

"No nicknames, Griff—no nicknames."

"No Griffs, brother Caleb—no Griffs, if you please; you know I will not be called Griff."

"Don't call me Solomon then."

"I—I called thee any thing *but* Solomon."

"Then there's an end of it, brother Griffith. I thought you *did*."

"Then listen to reason, Caleb. Doctor Wintletrap was, in truth, a diamond of the first water"—

"Dirty water, dirty water, Griffith—foul mouth, foul hands, foul linen, foul"—

"Zounds! you are enough to tire the patience of Job."

"Job, sure enough, was a most patient man. I did not think you knew any thing about him, Griffith."

"With all his patience, he could not have stood this."

"This! why, Griffith, he stood the devil, as you might have read, if you ever read about him at all."

"Zounds! here are twenty devils."

"Hey! what! where! what d'ye mean, Griffith?"

"No matter, no matter; the devil never dreamed of so ingenious a mode of torture; but look ye, sir, since your comprehension is only accessible to plain facts"—

"Stop a little, Griffith—you confound me; say that again."

"Bah!—was there, let me ask you, a scheme, a project, a speculation, in any one branch of philosophy; in statistics, political economy, or finance; in mechanics, in chemistry, geology, physiology, mineralogy"—

"There again at your plaguy alogies and ologies"—

"Hold your tongue, sir; I will be heard; and after that, answer me—was there a single one of these, during the whole of his splendid scientific career, in which he bore not some part or share?"

"May be so, may be so, Griffith; but it was the losing share, I'm sure, for the sum total was something worse than nothing: he lived for six months on the jail allowance, and died without sixpence to purchase his shroud."

"What of that! great men do not always meet with their desert."

"If he was a great man, Griffith, he met *his*, at least to my mind."

"*Your* mind, Caleb!"

"Ay, for bamboozling his credulous creditors, and paying them with philosophy and goosery, instead of pounds, shillings, and pence!"

"I see your drift, sir; but I despise it."

"Why, odds my life! brother Griffith, if he was the greatest conjurer of ye all, what has that to do with the boy? he didn't conjure *him*."

"Conjurer! Must I repeat to you, that you know not what you talk about?"

"You needn't repeat any thing of the sort. I do know what I am talking about—I am talking about the boy's success in life."

"Success in life! why, you would treat the heir of all the OWENS, as if he were to be a manufacturer of buttons or a sugar-baker."

"I could name something worse than either; but I don't wish to make you angry: with a little common sense, I have known a man"——

"Common sense; I should like to know how a man is to distinguish himself by common sense?"

"And I should like to know how he is to get on without it?"

"What! not a genius?"

"A fiddlestick!"

"Grant me patience! Did you ever hear of a CONDORCET or a KANT, a GUSTAVUS or an ALEXANDER, gaining celebrity by common sense?"

"Brother, brother! I never heard of but one of the whole bunch; and he, methinks, made but a bad business of it."

"Of whom are you speaking?"

"The coppersmith."

"The coppersmith!"

"Ay, ay; I see you know but little about him. He's in a book I wish you read oftener; but let that pass; and as for the rest, they may be sugar-bakers or button-makers, though I don't recollect their names in any firm; but of this I am pretty sure, if they hadn't common sense, they did more harm than good with all their celebrity, as you call it, whether in times past or present"——

"Brother Caleb, I blush for you; they were heroes and luminaries."

"Oh! then you mean to bring up your boy to that"——

"That—what?"

"Why, to be one of these heroes, or the other thing-o-my's, that are something of the same kind, I suppose"——

"I mean to bring him up to nothing."

"Nothing!"

"Nothing; and I have told you so over and over again; but there's no beating things into you."

"Lord have mercy upon me, that I should live to find my poor dear brother glorying in his madness. Why Griff, Griff!"——

"Griff again, sir! Have a care, or you will drive me raving mad!"

"Heaven keep me from so grievous a sin, Griffith. No, no"——

"What have I done, Caleb, to deserve this at your hands? Is it because I have preferred receiving pecuniary aid from *you*,

as a mark of distinction from all my other friends? Is it because, in supporting the family honours, I have sacrificed?"——

"No, no; spare me, dear, dear Griffith; I acknowledge the obligation, and wouldn't say a word that could give you pain for worlds—only"——

"Why then, in the very zenith of my hopes, with all the objects of my life ripening to view, exhibiting the fairest prospect of a long looked for harvest, do you come, like a nipping unseasonable frost, to cut off the blossom in the bud, and"——

"Nay, nay, brother Griffith—dear Griffith, you mistake me, indeed you do; it's all my ignorance, and I dare say your out-of-the-way plans are just what they should be, if I could only comprehend them; but when you talk of doing without common sense and bringing up a boy, who has his way to make in the world, upon genius, I can't for the life of me understand what you would be at."

"Not know what I mean by genius?"

"I know it's something out of the common line; because, with all your learning, you have never been able to make it clear to my mind. It may be like that pig in a bottle (pointing to a line of shelves filled with the rare and sportive productions of nature) with five legs in place of four, or"——

"Pish, Caleb, I'm a fool to sit disputing with you; as I have often said we do not fight with the same weapons."

"I'm sure, Griffith, I don't wish to fight at all, and much less with a brother."

"In a word, the boy is my own, and I have a right to dispose of him as I please."

"To be sure you have, Griffith; you may pickle him with the pig there, or teach him to walk on all-fours, like that great man beast that sits grinning in my face, like Grim Groudy in the story book. I only thought it right, and proper, and dutiful, as the boy's natural blood-relation, to offer my counsel and advice, that, 'till he can choose for himself, he be put in the right way to get on in the world, as others have done before him."

"With Cocker pinned to his breast as his *vade mecum*."

"And no bad pinafore either, brother Griffith. If it had stuck to yours, it would have paid better, to my mind, than all your snapdragons and butterflies."

"And have made me a drudge like thyself—as if the blood of CWM OWEN were stagnant in thy veins!"

"Griff, Griff, have a care; I'll not be twitted on that head, my blood is yours, and as noble, and as ancient, and as pure, and as hot, and"——

"Hubaboo, hubaboo! what the devil have I said or done to set it boiling in this manner? Here have you been heaping red-

hot coals upon my head for the last half hour, and are now the first to cry out FIRE!"

"Didn't you talk of my blood?"

"And is it not my own?"

"What has that to do with the question?"

"Every thing; would I disparage that which is my pride, my boast, my"—

"You spoke of my drudging it, or staining it, or something to that purpose; and no man living, no, not yourself, Griffith, shall dare to say the one or the other in my presence."

"Sdeath, brother, I only said I despised trade; and no man living shall prevent my saying before your face, or behind your back, that the blood of the OWENS is degraded by contact with it."

"And where, sir, would it have been *without it*? Answer me that."

"No matter; I would rather it flowed through a kennel than a 'compting-house.'"

"It hadn't a kennel left to flow in, sir."

"Heyday! who is it that disparages our blood now? But a truce, a truce, good Caleb, we shall never agree upon this subject: I hate and abhor your men of business, who calculate talent by the yard, and pare down men of wit and science to their own pocket rule and compass."

"Better, perhaps, than those scapegraces and spendthrifts—I call no names, and I name no persons—who weigh and measure nothing, but set their wits at work to undo what wiser heads have done before them. But it won't do, Griffith, it won't do; things *will* go on in the old way, in spite of your nincompoop gimcracks or periwinkle professors."

"Mighty well, my matter-of-fact brother; so we are all nincompoops, in your refined phraseology, because we are not optimists?"

"I know nothing of them; they may be nincompoops too, for aught I know."

"You would, forsooth, set us down as knaves or fools, because we do not believe this to be the best of all possible worlds."

"No such thing, Griffith; I know that it is not the best of all possible worlds, and you ought to know it too; and for my part, I think it grows harder and wicked every day."

"Pish! You do not comprehend me."

"That's true enough, Griffith; but I sha'n't think the worse of you for denying this naughty world to be the best possible."

"Why *then*, blame *us*, who wish to mend it?"

"Because I never knew any good come of your state-menders

or religion-menders. They all make more holes than they stop. Brother, brother, the strait road is quite broad enough!"

"Ay, ay, Caleb, broad enough for thee and thy plodding brethren: for ever dog-trot in a straight line—the high turn-pike—where, if gold mines were to lie to the right or the left, you would still jog on, without turning your eyes or your steps to explore them."

"Like enow, Griffith, like enow, and the less chance, I trow, of mistaking a bog for a mine, which, if my recollection serves me, *you* have done before now."

This was an unfortunate hit, or, as the initiated in the noble science of self-defence would term it, a "knock-down blow;" for be it known unto all whom it may concern, that Mr Griffith Owen had, a few years previous to the interesting dialogue which the reader has thus prematurely been permitted to overhear, sunk several thousand pounds in exploring an Irish bog in the neighbourhood of Carrickfergus, where tradition (and tradition alone) had deposited the treasure of a native prince, who had flourished in such remote antiquity that tradition herself had forgotten his very name.

But although a knock-down blow is a very serious thing, and may occasion a temporary suspension of sport to the thousands of well-dressed and fashionable amateurs congregated upon certain high and solemn occasions, it by no means follows that the sport is thereby spoiled, or the entertainment closed. Those of my readers whose unpolished or unfinished education has precluded them from scenes which would have been duly appreciated and relished by those masters of civil life, the Romans, in the most polished period of their history, may derive some comfort from the assurance that, generally speaking, the breath-expelling blow, in these Circensian games, operates only as an incitement to fresh activity, and to new efforts to return the compliment to the adversary on, or as nearly on, the same terms as possible. It is true that the increased action of the irritable nerves, when nature has replenished her patient, (or, in other words, when the bottle-holder has duly primed him,) is not always accompanied with a proportionate share of skill and judgment, and that blows hit at random sometimes fail to take effect upon the part intended.

This was pretty much the case in the instance before us: the blow of Mr Caleb Owen (with whom the reader will become better acquainted as we proceed) took effect upon a very sensitive part of his brother Griffith's constitution, and calling up blood enough into his face to supply a plethoric habit of body with the means of immediate strangulation, his breath seemed as effectually stopped as if the words had been anticipated by a

blow *secundum artem*. In like manner he was, for some seconds, without the ability to return it. Indeed he had a difficulty to encounter which the reader may, or may not, have discovered by what has already occurred; namely, that Mr Caleb Owen, being a simple matter-of-fact person, was secure from any attack in the immediate direction of that which so effectually brought down his antagonist. There was an appearance of wit in it, which, in sober truth, is on no account chargeable upon the good man, and which contributed to the perplexity as well as annoyance of his brother. He simply met with the fact as it happened to lie in his way; and Mr Griffith Owen having laid himself open, by an ill-chosen illustration of his argument, he could not fail to pick it up, as his memory re-echoed the allusion.

There was, however, a certain peculiarity of temperament common to both, which brought the powers of these two brothers very nearly upon a level, although in all other respects the Antipodes are not more diametrically opposed than were their several dispositions, pursuits, and opinions. They were both of high Welsh extraction, and the speculative and philosophical career of the one, and a certain dry methodical routine of life pursued by the other, were equally ineffectual in checking that divine impulse which moves heroic minds to right themselves, whenever they feel, or fancy they feel, offended. They were most loving and affectionate brothers; but each loved after his own peculiar fashion; and so frequent was the collision occasioned by the very opposite views they took upon every possible question of foreign or domestic policy—that is, on their own concerns and those of their neighbours—that a stranger might have been justified in doubting the existence of any thing in the shape of fraternal attachment; but he would have judged wrong—I speak from a perfect knowledge of the fact—and although it might naturally be supposed that the evident and unquestioned superiority of Mr Griffith Owen over his less enlightened brother, had, in the course of five-and-forty years, (or thereabouts,) so firmly established his authority, as to leave him upon all occasions master of the field, it is astonishing upon what equal terms they met when once warmed by the exercise of their several weapons.

Anger is a ready menstruum for the solution of all distinctions and the most opposed qualities. The philosopher (if he ever can be angry) and the peasant, are scarcely distinguishable when the fermenting process is in action; and with all my respect for the honourable family in whose service my humble abilities as a biographer are engaged, it is not to be denied that the effects of Mr Griffith Owen's indignation, and their

reaction upon his no less irritable brother, might upon the present occasion have produced a domestic war, as fierce and fiery as if provoked by a mere Saxon of yesterday, incapable of tracing a distinct pedigree higher than HENGIST or Horsa.

Fortune, however, who, in some disguise or other, has, from the days of old HOMER down to our own, constantly interposed to snatch those who are destined to live in history from impending destruction, here stepped in, to check the march of the contending parties as they advanced to action.

Just as Mr Griffith Owen's indignation had sent up a competent supply of matter to the tip of his tongue, (having already discharged all those ready-made missiles which, in the language of invective, supply the place of reason and argument,) he was checked on a sudden by the abrupt entrance of a little old woman in a mob cap and black hood, the fire of whose eyes, though quenched in some degree by the intervention of a huge pair of spectacles, appeared to illuminate her whole visage, and to concentrate its rays on the extremity of a most portentous projection, intended by nature for a nose, but by some strange artificial contact in its advances towards maturity, curved and twisted into something more like a Scotch mull, both in its form and contents. In a state of nearly equal irritation, this formidable personage, running up to him, screamed in a key shrill enough to drown even his objurgatory exclamations, and to arrest them in their mid career:—

"Why, here's a commence!—Was ever the like of it seen in this 'varsal world—the deuce a bit of nurse Clotworthy, and I dare to say ye ha' never been a'ter her."

The conscience-stricken Griffith started back as if he had seen a ghost!

"There now," continued the terrific vision, "as sure as peas is peas, a' knows no more of her than the child unborn."

"Unborn!" cried Caleb, gently touching her arm; she withdrew it with a contemptuous jerk, whilst she still continued to address his brother, whose eyes were traversing the apartment in every direction.

"Ye'll be the death—yes, ye will—ye'll be the death o' your own flesh and blood. Why, listen—do listen,—there—there now, if the little angel ben't roaring like twenty divels."

"Odds my life! Caleb," cried Griffith in a subdued tone, which marked the oblivion of his anger and the cause of it together—"where, where is the paper?"

Nothing, however, could pacify the old midwife, for such I presume the reader has already discovered her to be. She screamed, or, by this time from increased hoarseness, roared on, "It's the unnaturalest, cruelest, barbarest"—

"Peace, you old beldam," exclaimed Griffith, in a vain attempt to outroar her—then turning towards Caleb, his imploring eyes besought him to look for the paper; when both darting down at the same moment in brotherly sympathy, their heads came in violent contact, and for the first time in their lives, perhaps, were equally illuminated. The old woman, whose violent and extravagant gesticulations had brought her within the immediate focus of attraction, shared in the common fate, but still maintained her relative position at the ear of Griffith.—Scrambling on the floor, for carpet there was none, they scratched up and turned every scrap of paper that presented itself in the scanty interstices left by matted jars, fractured retorts, parts and portions of pipkins and bells, orreries and pop-guns, diving bells and patent ploughshares, air-pumps, foreign journals, galvanic batteries, and mouse-traps, accompanied by a running symphony prophetically denouncing the consequences attendant upon such a sacrilege in the very precincts of her tutelary lady, Lucina.

At length a joyful exclamation, which, with a corresponding action, threw the unfortunate sibyl to the further extremity of the room, announced the recovery of the precious relic, for such it really was. Having taken every twist and turn of the late interesting discourse in the hands of the philosopher, parts of it had been severed during the more animated prosecution of the argument; and what remained would have puzzled the brain of Caleb to decipher. Aided, however, by a lively imagination, it was at once rendered intelligible to a man of general science, who, amongst the variety of his pursuits, cannot be supposed to have neglected the art of *guessing*, in his antiquarian researches.

Now, for the better understanding a scene in which the actors were at least as much perplexed as the dullest of my readers is likely to be, it may be just necessary to state that Mr Griffith Owen was a most profound system-monger, and had for several previous months of his invaluable time, been occupied in ascertaining the necessary requisites of a nurse, from the collective sources opened by Locke, Rousseau, Tytler, &c. &c. Combining these in an individual whom he had at length discovered, he had engaged her, without admitting his good lady, or the usual authorities upon such occasions, into his counsels. This person had recently arrived in Bristol, (for there, gentle reader, for the present you are deposited,) from the hills above Crickhowel, and had of course transmitted her address to Mr Griffith Owen. This scrap of paper, therefore, was of no less importance to him, than eventually to ourselves; for he had established the fact in his own mind, that the brightest genius might be perverted in the hands of an ignorant nurse; and if so fatal an

accident had befallen our hero, (for such it will already be perceived the precious babe must in due course become,) it is probable he would have been lost in the crowd of ordinary beings, and certainly have been left to find another historian. Who then can blame the caution induced by so strong a sense of duty as that which determined Griffith to insist upon going himself for this important personage, when the necessity for her presence at her post should require it? He had pertinaciously maintained this determination, and when the birth of a male child (the object of all his desire and ambition for a certain period) was announced, just one hour previous to this precise moment of our narrative, he was rushing out of his study, when met by his brother Caleb, who came simply to enquire how things were going with the good lady in the straw. Whether there be a stronger interest in relating our good fortune than in following it up; or, whether the love of discussion is paramount to all other love in philosophic minds; or, whether it be really true that great wits have an inherent claim to treacherous memories, it is not for me to say; much less could it be expected that our good midwife, with all her qualifications and endowments, should, in the agitation of the moment, when the life of her precious charge was at stake, take upon her to analyse the *abstractions* of a philosophical genius!

If her reproaches, therefore, were rather unceremonious, they cannot altogether be considered either unnatural or unjust. Mr Griffith felt this, and was in consequence proportionably annoyed and indignant. He dismissed her with one more solitary but pithy prayer for her ultimate destiny, which she did not fail to re-echo (like such phenomena in Ireland) with considerable additions, whilst he seized the paper, and rushing out of the house, having *only* forgotten his hat, began treading the streets of this ancient city, as Archimedes may be supposed to have done those of the more ancient Syracuse upon an infinitely less important occasion. He pursued his way through lanes and cross-cuts, at the risk of his own neck, to say nothing of the various properties which lay exposed on stalls and barrows on either side of his course, in the hope of more quickly reaching his point of destination. But, unlike the philosopher of old, who at least had solved his problem before he proclaimed it, our modern genius speculated as he ran, and met with so many obstacles, what with turnings to the left, which should have been made to the right, and *culs-de-sac* which he chose to convert into thoroughfares, that he lost another full hour before he could fairly exclaim with his great archetype, "I have found it—I have found it!"

"What!" I hear some fastidious reader demand, (of which

class, by the way, I beg leave once for all to declare I desire to have as few as possible,)—"What! and is all this fuss and stir about a new-born babe, a thing of clouts and swaddling clothes? Methinks the man must be in his dotage to swell and swagger about philosophy and metaphysics and modes, in which, after all, he appears but a smatterer, and to go and quarrel with and bespatter his brother, and all about the genius and qualities of a babe of an hour old.—A likely story truly!" All I ask in return is a little patience, Mr Philosopher, for such I know you to be from your talent at hypercriticism, whether in pantaloons or petticoats. It may have been your good or ill fortune (I do not mean to commit myself to any opinion upon so important a question) never to have met with a thorough-paced speculator or projector; but I am willing to appeal to, ay, and to abide the verdict, of any twelve discreet men in your own immediate neighbourhood, whether they have not known many a proper and goodly person of this description, who has not only decided the future destiny of his children before they were born, but has actually expended their fortunes before he had fixed upon the precise mode of making them. Besides, it is to be recollected, (and I throw myself upon my more candid readers,) that I am now stating plain matters of fact, to which my veracity as a legitimate historian stands altogether pledged; and which, if they were of ordinary or every-day occurrence, would be neither worth the trouble of my recording, nor of their perusal. Moreover, there is neither discrimination nor novelty in the objection which brother Caleb, with no pretensions to critical acumen, has already made in as forcible terms as his small vocabulary would admit, and with as little temper as the sourdest critic could desire. But I am fighting shadows, whilst I ought to be duly aware of the more substantial difficulties which environ a writer in every department of literature in this (justly styled) "enlightened era of the nineteenth century."

We live in a microscopic age; and the meanest object, the minutest detail, is considered a treasure equally by the poet and the patriot; although it may occasionally lead the one to be a *little too* poetical, and render the former somewhat *prosaic*. This felicitous discovery may claim its legitimate exercise in that peculiar species of history which is now submitted to the judgment of the world; and to evince at once the correctness of this opinion, and my fixed determination to be guided by it, I beg leave to state, from my notes taken at the precise moment by an authorized short-hand writer, (a class of men standing foremost in the rank of modern literature, and always provided with the best places,) that the child who has made some noise in this our first chapter, and who incontestably made much more in the

nursery, previous to the arrival of nurse Clotworthy, was at length, by means too well known to my readers of both sexes (provided they are not philosophers) to need any minute description, reconciled to the world, and soothed into silent acquiescence in the various arrangements proposed and carried into effect by that good old lady and her clustering gossips.

Alternately between eating and sleeping, (the great leading functions chalked out by dame Nature for the next few years of his life,) he gave colour to the fond hopes entertained by his father, by exhibiting a genius unparalleled, according to every leading authority present, in those pursuits which lay immediately open to his young ambition.

CHAPTER II.

It is a maxim of an obsolete author, but one who is supposed to have known something of what he wrote about, that a poet, in order to ingratiate himself with his readers, should rush pell-mell with them "*in medias res*," as he terms it, which being rendered in the more refined language of our country, means the core and pith, or more literally, the middle of his story. The soundness of the advice, it is not my province to discuss; but the authority being nearly two thousand years of age, I hold myself entitled to plead it before any modern court of criticism, which may feel itself entitled to question the right I have exercised of thus drawing you, my fair and gentle readers, at once into the very focus, as it were, of my history. I have placed you behind a screen, where, without breach of manners or impeachment of your delicacy, you have become acquainted with three important personages, who are destined to make a considerable figure in the course of the following pages. Some snarler may affirm (for such men will affirm any thing to the disparagement of their neighbours) that an historian is no poet, and that consequently the Horatian statute does not apply to the case before the court. To this, I answer, he knows nothing at all about the matter. Some have asserted that Herodotus and even Livy himself (of whom I profess to have no knowledge but on hearsay,) have more poetry than is to be found in half the professed poets of succeeding ages; but I suspect this to be an observation made for some sinister purpose by the very snarlers themselves, and I will never be a party to a system which thrives only by picking

holes in an old coat, or preventing a new one from sitting easy on a man's shoulders.

I will only put this question to the worthies: Are not Fielding, and Smollett, and *the Scot*, as much poets (if these men know the force of the term) as Dryden, Pope, or that other Scot,

If that *other* be,
And be not HE!

It is true that the authority, obsolete as I before observed, on which I make my stand, pre-supposes a certain prescience or foreknowledge in the reader or auditor of the history to be handled; but this could only remain in force as a dogma, whilst the art of invention, or poetry *proper*, as I may call it, was in its infancy; and in an age when genius was only permitted to play about the light kindled as far back as the first birth of the muse, and before she could well see. Besides, I think it may be predicated of many of my readers (without offence to the generality) that they are, by this time at least, to the full as well (if not better) acquainted with Mr Griffith and Mr Caleb Owen, as with any of the actors in the courts of Sparta, Thebes, or Argos, or those unfortunate nymphs and swains whom the bard of love has thought proper to metamorphose into "beasts of the field, and fishes of the sea."

All this being premised and taken for granted, I may now safely conduct my patient friends out of the corner they have hitherto been permitted to occupy, and gratify their curiosity—which I calculate to be at its height just at this precise moment of time—by informing them who and what these worthy brothers are, and what were the previous circumstances which occasioned the confusion in which we find them involved; but this is a long story and must be told in my own way, for who is to control me?—The Reviewers;—psha, I don't care a rush for them. I could write my own review if I chose, but I disdain it, and leave my history to take its chance among the best and most sincere of all reviewers.—Who?—Look in the glass, my fair catechiser; and I mean no great compliment after all.

Be it known, then, that Mr Griffith Owen, and his brother Caleb, were the sons of a Welsh gentleman, descended through a long line of ancestors from one of the oldest families in the land *where old families grow*.

Mr Geoffrey ap Hoel ap Rice ap Asser ap Owen, (for that was the gentleman's name, although for brevity's sake we shall in future subtract three-fourths of these patronymics, upon an understanding that they are always to be *understood*;) had, in defiance of the hereditary abhorrence entertained through all ages by his family, for commerce in every shape, been induced,

or more correctly speaking, was compelled to realize a very handsome independence in a house of business in Bristol. The paternal acres of this sole and last representative of all the Owens, having gradually made unto themselves wings of the various materials furnished by dowers, portions, foreclosed mortgages, and docked entails, took their final flight from Cwm Owen castle, under the signs manual of that gentleman and his father, on the twenty-first anniversary of the birth of the former. His father died soon after this concluding settlement of the estate, and Geoffrey, of course, inherited the whole of his interest in it, which could boast at least of one advantage, not always ensured to inheritances, namely, that it was wholly unencumbered. The capital sum of fifteen hundred pounds sterling, the residuum of the final process, was all that the representative of an infinite line of ancestry had now left to support the family honours. The transfer of the castle of Cwm Owen, with the few acres which the former possessors had left still attached to it, was about to be made to a very honest citizen and dealer in hardware, one who had lived long enough in the city of Bristol to qualify himself to live out of it for the remainder of his life.

There were, however, many palliating circumstances, although of a negative nature, to lighten the effect of this sad blow upon Mr Geoffrey Owen. First and foremost, that gentleman was not likely to be misled by his imagination, or to bewilder himself in the mazes of profound or speculative meditation, upon the strange reverses of his family. He was fortunately an exception (I say fortunately, observe, only under the peculiar circumstances of the case) to the general tone and feeling which are so strongly characteristic of his countrymen in general, and more particularly of his own ancestors. His hereditary pride appears to have subsided gradually, in the exact ratio of his diminished means to feed it.

Those local feelings of attachment, which are in general apt to cling more closely to a man the further the object of them recedes from his grasp, lost much of their influence upon his mind, probably by the dilapidated state of his mansion, and the no inconsiderable degree of personal inconvenience he had long experienced from the rival contention of the rats within, and the elements without, to disturb his quiet possession of it; to which may be added, the total absence of all that could directly appeal to his sensibilities; grey-headed seneschals or weeping domestics, turned adrift with nothing but a staff and scrip to seek refuge among strangers; venerable nurses with old nursery tales, and foster parents wailing and mourning over the decayed magnificence of their earlier days, through half a dozen generations!—There were none of those overpowering accompaniments

to awaken in the undone chief those torturing sympathies which form essential ingredients for the pathetic, both in true and feigned histories ; and for the best of all possible reasons, because nothing beyond a barefooted drudging maid of all work, and a day labourer occasionally hired to tether a single cow, who had the range of the homestead, whereon grass appeared to grow, were admitted to be sharers in the reduced or rather extinguished hospitalities of Cwm Owen for the last two generations. The misery (and misery enough unquestionably there was) which had prevailed in the dilapidated mansion of late years, had nothing in it of the splendid or the interesting. How to live upon the least possible food without absolute starvation, and how to keep the wind and rain out with the least possible expenditure of money, might supply many strange and curious expedients in detail ; but would, I fear, afford but scanty materials for the entertainment of the sentimental reader. Had I haply been born a poet, indeed, something might have been done even in this way ; but alas ! we know that poets are not to be manufactured, and I must surrender such subjects, which I hereby do, to those great modern geniuses who find, if not “ tongues or sermons,” poetry at least, in stocks and stones, and make their dismounted muse discover “ good in every thing.”

In the immediate precincts of Cwm Owen castle, indeed, there were several of those patient animals who have lately been surprized to find themselves in the precincts of the muses, attracted by the thistles which grew in profusion under its walls, but none that I have been able to discover (however worthy of a lyrical bard) that possessed any hereditary claim to the tears and sympathy of Mr Geoffrey Owen, had he been either poetically or sentimentally inclined, which, as I before insinuated, I have reason to think he was not. This gentleman was, from all I have been able to learn, a plain, sensible, straight-forward sort of being, who finding himself at twenty-one, when most others are considered of age to take possession of their estates, only just qualified, by his arrival at years of discretion, to cut off his own succession, began, when left to himself by his father's death, to look about him for the means to sustain life without an estate, which experience had shown him was with difficulty to be done even with it. But my zeal in the service of the reader is outstripping my discretion.

For the purpose of observing that *lucidus ordo* which is the very life and soul of history, it is necessary that we should take a retrospective view of the family of the Owens, for several generations previous to the epoch at which we have so hastily and prematurely arrived.—Nay, start not, my good reader—it is not possible to give the history of any man, that is, of any man

whose history is worth giving, and whose pedigree is a national concern, without going back half a dozen ages at least. You may, however, trust to my moderation. I am not one of those who, conscious of my own power, am disposed to use it despotically. I promise, therefore, to be as concise and terse as I can be, consistently with my duty to you, to the family for whom I am concerned, and to myself. I should not, perhaps, dare to afford such a pledge, did not my obscurity (preserved among other minor considerations on this very ground) free me from all bodily fear and apprehension of one of those dread champions of heraldic honours, who denied the patent of gentility to a suitor, because his family was plebeian until the war of the two roses!—a fact, as Miss Edgeworth would say—and a fact, upon my honour. Without further exordium, then, proceed we to examine the documents by which we are enabled to show that the hero of this history, whatever may be his future fortunes, must ever be entitled to respect and honour, at least among those of his countrymen who have not fallen from their allegiance to genealogy, consonants, and goat's milk.

From the days of Noah down to the period of Henry VII. of England, we have the genealogical tree of the Owens of Cwm Owen, in a clear uninterrupted series, with such marginal scholia as were furnished by the family bards, and a long descent of learned derwydds, or druids. The reader will, no doubt, duly appreciate my tenderness in omitting *in detail* this portion of the family history, which would indeed occupy more volumes than have been allowed to histories of this nature, as my worthy bookseller informs me, since the days of Grandison; but I must be permitted to extract a few materials from the aforementioned marginal notices for the edification and delight of all true lovers of antiquarian research. Puny critics and caviling sceptics have been found in all ages to object to the authenticity of detailed memoirs respecting heroes and legislators, whom they pretend to suppose lived antecedent to all record; but here we have authorities, the genuineness of which not one of the family of the Owens, in whose archives they have constantly been kept, ever entertained the smallest doubt, and whose judgment upon such a document must be considered conclusive.

When I say that the record from the flood is unbroken and uninterrupted, it is to distinguish it from the more general notices concerning the family, from the period of the creation to that general overthrow of the race of man, and the scattered fragments of their history, which go far to establish it, as consisting of preadamite magnates. The manner in which these hints are thrown out, especially in reference to the latter hypothesis, leads us to conclude that no existing documents were

found sufficiently authoritative to warrant the character of ascertained biography; so that they are not positively insisted on, and may rank with those more modern records of history, which, for want of precise information, we usually term fabulous. When, however, the real history commences, we are sufficiently repaid for all antecedent obscurity. The apparent absurdities of the Egyptian and Pagan mythology are reconciled, according to the strictest rules of historical accuracy, with plain matters of fact, which at once sweep away from the face of the earth the theories of false philosophy, and the guesses of doating antiquarianism.

For instance, Minos of Crete, Menu, (he of the Vedas) and Noah, are herein proved to be one and the same person, and no other than Menu Teirgwaedd, a Welshman, whose origin is accurately traced in the Triads of Caradoc of Nantgarvan. That rogue Cadmus, who had long been suspected of having no Phenician blood in his veins, turns out to be an adventurer from the banks of the Clywd, who stole his alphabet ready-made from a Welsh gwydd or cwyz, (emphatically called by Taliesin Bum Gwydd yngwarthan) at the very moment when he was manufacturing a basket, in order to try the experiment of a metempsychosis upon the person of this Clywdmouth or Cadmus himself, who escaped in a coracle with his literary treatises to the shores of *Greece*. The long-disputed identity of Thoth Trismegistus, with various contending characters of antiquity, is herein finally established in the person of Hu Gadarn, a native Cambrian, who, with a handful of his hardy countrymen, made a circuit of the world—founded the Egyptian priesthood—established the Brachmans in India, and taking Thrace in their way back to Wales, left Orpheus, a most respectable harper of Aberystwith, in full possession of the priestly, kingly, and prophetic offices united in his own person. The antique stock of British heroes we find also identified with the main builders of Babel, who were, in fact, the original Titans and Cabiri, which at once accounts to us for the obscurity and fabulous mysticism in which those sly rogues, the Egyptians and Greeks, so long continued to envelope their origin. But at length the new light breaks in upon us. The OWEN table has dispersed the clouds and mists of antiquity; and how much toil and labour—how many ponderous tomes and well-larded folios might have been spared through all the intervening generations, had not modesty or pride (for I do not exactly know to which we ought to attribute it) stood in the way of its revelation to mankind. The exploits of those two extraordinary personages, whom we have been taught to admire, from our boyish days, under the names of Bacchus and Hercules, may lose some of

their poetical accompaniments, but appear infinitely more natural in the modest clothing of veritable history, being neither more nor less than the one a disbanded captain, who had brought the art of wrestling to a state of perfection unknown to the rest of the world, and travelled with a jolly publican of Caerleon, who first mixed his waters after the flood, and discovered the mysterious art of concocting leek broth, and the manufacture of metheglin.

The precise place of Eurydice's descent is proved to be a slough on the summit of Cader Idris, whence Gwydd Owen or Orpheus, who, as before observed, was an admirable performer on the Welsh harp, attempted to extricate her, and was abused for his pains by three derwydds, or cynical priests, who lived hard by, and had shut her up for some of their vile purposes. These are, as usual, pressed into the Greek mythology as a three-headed dog; and sad dogs they certainly were. But to expose the blundering plagiarisms of those whom we have been habituated to revere under the character of ancients, we can prove that they actually converted a well-known Welsh judge, a cotemporary of Abraham, into the river Styx, and a cabbage-plot of the Owens in Cardiganshire, into the garden of the Hesperides—a fact so precisely indicated in the family chart, as to leave no room for discussion upon the question. Hesperus, or the evening star, turns out to be an old priest of the name of Merddin, as the names duly etymologized may be brought to attest; whilst the Apollo of the Orphic hymns (which, by the by, are shown to be genuine old British ballads) is genealogically traced to an amateur fiddler, who held a considerable property near Penmanmawr, and was contemporary with Semiramis, who was herself not without Cambrian blood in her veins. This latter is established in a long note, with undoubted testimony to the fact of that lady having run off with Nin Owen, a poor relation of the family, who sacrilegiously corrupted the patronymic into Ninus, after he had made a settlement in Mesopotamia. A very distinguished female of the family, whose name was Ola, Olwen, Owen, Oven, or Ovenus, is admitted, upon evidence drawn even from the spurious records of vulgar history, to be the Venus whom some emigrants, heated by the violence of their passion, raised into a goddess, and reported to have sprung from the sea, as being a native of the British Isles, but who ran away with Mac Evor, Mac Vor, or Mavor, commonly called Mars, an aboriginal prince of the wild Irish. In a note, supposed to have been inserted about the period of the Jewish Exodus, it is more than insinuated that Noah himself was the first progenitor (after the flood) of the Owen family, and that the name upon some later occasion had been (which was very usual, as is well

known to every learned etymologist) either anagrammatized, or, by some blundering Greek, reversed in the order of reading, according to his more modern fashion of transcribing it.

There is certainly a great appearance of probability in this hypothesis, as *we*, not being of the family stock, may be disposed to rank it under this designation. For, if we allow a similar latitude to the learned Jacob Bryant, (which I, for one, most assuredly do,) there is little difficulty in identifying NŌE (or Noe) with ŌEN, (or Owen,) being merely the transposition of the same letters, necessary and allowable to all who desire to come to any decision upon disputed derivations. It is to be hoped that the learned society, recently established in the principality for furthering discoveries of this nature, may employ their valuable time with effect, in authenticating this important claim of our hero's family, and in elucidating all the obscurities which have been artfully, and no doubt purposely, thrown in the way of the history of their native country, by the inventors of hieroglyphics in Egypt, and the pilfering jugglers in the stage plays of Eleusina! May the joint labours of these learned descendants of their illustrious fathers, be at length effectual to ascertain whether (according to a late learned hypothesis) the pillars of Seth were really used for ballast in the Ark, and if so, whether they at present lie buried on the banks of the Euphrates, or were, as has been asserted, cruelly employed by the peasant architect in the construction of Pont y pryd over the immortal Taff! I can only add, that the invaluable documents entrusted to my care shall be open to the very learned body in embryo; and that the Ante-Noahic memoranda, as well as any other authentic records in my possession, are perfectly at their service. But the fascination of these interesting documents must not withdraw me from more important duties. From the 532d roll, however, ending about the commencement of the reign of Henry VII., it is necessary, for the purposes of a much more important history, (I mean that of our hero himself,) that I should extract, in a regular order and series, the generations of the Owens of Cwm Owen.

In the fourth year of the aforesaid Henry, we find Tudor Owen in full and quiet possession of the castle of his ancestors at Cwm Owen, consisting of a demesne of five thousand good and substantial Welsh acres. Having returned from the wars, in which he had the command of a company under Richmond, his maternal relation, he retired to his estate, followed by all those of his tenantry who had borne arms in the same cause with him. Among these were many younger sons, (especially officers,) who, having made little by fighting, though they would have made nothing by staying at home, were hospitably retained

by their chieftain in the castle of his fathers. The army, especially in those days, was not a school of economy; and as Tudor Owen had expended all that his loyalty could realize in the shape of money, during a long period of the wars of the two roses, he trusted to his dirty acres to supply what might in future be necessary for his own support, and that of his multitudinous followers and retainers. At the age of forty-five, having duly considered the importance of a family heir, and having previously consulted the pedigrees of all the neighbouring chieftains who had female branches to dispose of, he at length chose the daughter of a castellan, whose antiquity was his principal claim so such an honour, and wedded a girl who had no fortune indeed, but who brought with her seven high-minded unportioned brothers, and cousins without number, to support her in her new dignities. The boundaries of the castle were enlarged, the accommodations amplified, and the union of the trees was necessarily succeeded by arrangements for the extension and fructification of all its branches. In plainer terms, and without a figure, cousins and brothers, and brothers' wives, and wives' cousins *ad infinitum*, were necessarily accommodated in the castle of the chief, of whom it was always predicated, that if there was "room in the heart, there must be room in the house." This was in the natural course and order of things, and appeared *primâ facie*; but there was a sub-current which ran *passibus æquis*, but was not so clearly perceived, and which, in the long run, contributed not a little to undermine, not only the castle, but the castle demesnes. The reader will perceive that I am somewhat inclined to tropes and figures, and I could, if necessary, prove that these can only be the product of a poetical imagination, which might afford hopes of variety in his future entertainment: but it is not necessary; and I shall only say, once for all, (which is a very general excuse for all the coxcombs and pedants of the present day,) that it is my way; and if I have not yet gained more credit with him than such wretched things as these are, I may as well lay down my pen, and put all I have already written into the fire; but I will do no such thing, having many and urgent reasons against it. I beg leave, therefore, in order to satisfy all tastes, to state, without either trope or figure, what might easily have been understood before, that such revelry and junketing, and eating and drinking, and tourneying and tilting, cannot go on without money, and that all the beeves and beverage being consumed at home, things not bred and made at home must be paid for in other gear, which, I believe, from all I have been able to collect, was much the same in the period I am treating of as at the present moment.

But I am always for referring to facts, and it is a melancholy

one that Owen ap Owen his son, when he succeeded to his father, early in the reign of Henry VIII., was compelled to alienate a large portion of the estate of Cwm Owen, in order to live upon the remainder. Warned by his father's extravagance, the heir began by retrenching all superfluities, and setting his affairs in order; in return for which he was stigmatized as Owen the Niggard, and was held in intuitive abhorrence by his cousins, even to the tenth generation, as a degenerate and rotten graft upon the Owens' stock. The very reputation of his mother was at one time called in question; but the reflection that she had never stepped beyond the precincts of Cwm Owen after her marriage, and that if she had incurred the misfortune of a fall, it could only have been upon one of the branches of the family tree, her fair character was restored, and not a word more was whispered against her.

Whether frugality is a plant which does not thrive amongst a high-minded people, or whether abstinence is destructive of a Cambrian constitution, I cannot take upon me to say; but so far is certain, from the authentic record, that Owen ap Owen had scarcely performed the duty of supplying an heir to the property, when he took leave of his property and his life at one and the same moment, not without suspicion of poison, which in those days was constantly excited by the premature or unexpected exit of a great man, or an obnoxious character.

A glorious minority under the tutelage of his grandmother, who resolved wholly to retrieve the Owen celebrity for hospitality, which had been called in question during the life of her ungracious son, restored her grandson Madoc, when he arrived at one-and-twenty, exactly to the point from which his father had previously started; that is, with half the original property, and a huge debt incurred by the expense of bringing him up to man's estate, in a manner fitting and becoming the heir of all the Owens. Thus carefully educated, it is not to be supposed he would fall into the error of his father. He possessed no such sordid spirit; he kept his gates open, and his table spread, to all comers; and when he died, in the reign of Elizabeth, the last bag in the strong box of the castle was emptied, to defray the expense of his magnificent obsequies, at which half the principality was sumptuously regaled. Money, as I have had occasion to observe more than once already, must be had, or things are at a stand. Long-accumulated incumbrances must be paid off; and when land is surety for the debt, the creditors possess advantages which they are seldom slow in realizing. The Owens were, fortunately, never without direct heirs, (as far, at least, as I have been able to ascertain, and my opportunities, as the reader may premise, have not been few or limited,) and the

hotbed of hospitality, under Madoc ap Rice ap Owen, was most prolific in its supply of mouths to cater upon the aforesaid lands of Cwm Owen. No less than six sons and seven daughters were united with the immediate heir, Kenneth Owen, when he succeeded upon the death of his father. A fresh alienation became indispensable, which, with the former slices cut off by his predecessors, reduced the original demesne of 5000 acres to 1500. But I fear to grow tedious to such of my readers as delight not in details, so gratifying to the thorough-bred antiquarian, and must, therefore, endeavour to epitomize the remainder of the descent of Pendarves Owen, premising that I reserve all my tediousness to bestow upon readers of every description, when I come down to my immediate favourite, the hero of this history, for whom I have already undergone so much literary toil and labour.

Hewys, or Hugh Owen, then, (I cannot decipher which,) I find supporting the royal cause during the great Rebellion, and retiring after the Restoration upon two-thirds of his original inheritance. Griffith Owen, surnamed the Falconer, from the character of his pursuits, frittered away his income and his time, in a manner which sets all enquiry at defiance; which, together with the rage for electioneering, which seized upon his successor Glendower, carried off, at one fell swoop, the greater part of the remaining lands of Cwm Owen. Soured and disappointed at the folly of his father, his successor concentrated and embodied his feelings of disappointment, and directed them all against the then-existing government, which probably had never heard of him; and very nearly reduced him to a state of perpetual incarceration, after the final failure of the unfortunate adventurer in the year forty-five. Luckily, he had a son, and luckily too, that son had told twenty-one years; so, following the example of his prudent forefather, he took off another slice of the Abyssinian milch cow, and left her, as we have already had occasion to observe, to the father of Geoffrey Owen, with scarcely any thing on her bones. The skeleton, indeed, was not worth the keeping, for the castle itself was in a state of dilapidation, and the score or two acres which were its scant accompaniment, exhibited little to cover its nakedness.

The effort, therefore, was not so great as might have been imagined, by which the heir of Cwm Owen, in the person of Geoffrey, the grandfather of our future hero, parted for ever from the worn-out remnant of his ancestral mantle. The final transfer of this final remnant was made to a Bristol shopkeeper, as previously intimated, retiring from business, and Geoffrey had now only seriously to consider, how his humble funds might be applied so as to afford some permanent means

of support. This might have puzzled a man of a speculative turn of mind, who would have found a sufficient number of expedients in half an hour to employ him in retracing and unraveling them to their original source *in nubibus*. Not so, Geoffrey;—he discovered, without much reflection, that the measures adopted by the family of the Cwm Owens, through the greater part of their generations, were sufficiently illustrative of the means by which a fine property may be reduced to nothing; and, turning his eyes at the moment towards the little snug tie-wigged trader of Bristol, in a three-cornered hat, and a snuff-coloured coat and dittos, who was in the act of viewing his recent purchase, he saw also an illustration of the means by which an estate may be raised out of nothing.

It is not my business to discuss or pursue any nice abstract question in philosophy or metaphysics, which may arise in the progress of this history. I only record facts, and though it may be said that nothing can come of nothing, I have the means of proving, beyond the possibility of cavil or dispute, that Peter Pellett, the new lord of Cwm Owen, did literally begin the world with nothing, nay worse than nothing, having been born in the poor-house of the parish of Keynsham (between Bath and Bristol) and bred upon the eleemosynary contributions of the parishioners of that place, until he was able to do in the world (as it is called) for himself. The little citizen bowed with as much humility to Mr Geoffrey Owen, as if he had been selling a saucepan, instead of buying a castle; so habitual were the manners to which he stood indebted for the goods of fortune. The latter, in following up the suggestion which the peculiar circumstances of his situation had prompted, addressed Mr Peter Pellett—"You appear to be a very fortunate man, sir, by your successful industry to have become the purchaser of this castle."

"Castle, quotha!—yes, yes—I ask ye pardon—it was called a castle in the pertic'lers of sale, and that were my main objection."

"Objection!—How's that, sir?"

"Why, I never see'd a castle that warn't a jail—I ask ye pardon—and so thinks I, a'ter all I've toiled an laboured—an owed no man a farden—it's but a bad job to buy oneself into jail, that's a good un'—ayn't it?—but la—they laughed at me, and said e'ery man's house was a castle in this country; so I made no more ado but bought it out and out, as the saying is—I ask ye pardon."

"My pardon! For what, sir?"

"Oh! that's my way—I beg ye—I mean that's my way, all as I may say in the way of business. It takes hugely—Two

customers together—can't answer both—ask pardon of one—serve the other. Why, sir, it tells in a sight of ways; make a small mistake in a bill—beg your pardon, sir—man tells a little bit of a lie, saving your presence, must beg your pardon, sir. It's all one, always handy—so got into it, and so can't get out of it; that's good—an't it?"

"Thou art a humourist, Mr Pellett."

"Anan!—Oh humourist, well enough at home—that is, to wife and brats—he! he! ask ye pardon—that won't do in trade—be in good humour with all—you're an ass, says a testy fellow—beg your pardon, sir—I'll knock you down, sirrah—bow the lower; ask pardon again, and he begins to cheapen."

"Thou art at least a politician," smiled Geoffrey.

"Ask ye pardon—never more out in your life—never knew a politician make a fortin in my born life—always steered clear of them there things. Vote for my friend, Mr Kingsman, says one—beg your pardon, sir, I can't promise. Vote for Mr Crop, says another—beg pardon, don't mean to vote at all."

"So you surrender your privilege on the score of prudence?"

"Why—lauk, never voted but once for a parliament man, and got enough of it then—never vote again. Why, sir, I ask—I mean, I got a large commission for the Russey market—house failed—fobbed off with two and sixpence in the pound—and lost a venter to Boney's Haris, by giving offence to Alderman Totherside, which neighbour Twostringit took up, and made seven hundred pounds hard cash by."

"Rather hard upon you, Mr Pellett, as you voted so conscientiously."

"Ay, ay, that's all gammon; what's conscience got to do with voting for a parliament man?—Never see him again, ten to one—never get nothing out of him a'terwards, unless so be when he's served his seven years, out of his time, as we call it; hey! good—weigh him in his balance again."

"Well, sir, what I would ask of you," said Mr Geoffrey Owen, interrupting his loquacity, "supposing a man like myself were to enter into business, what is the first step?"

"The first step—into a good business, to be sure—hey!"

"I'm not disposed to trifle, *Mister Pellett*; I ask you a serious question, and desire you to inform me what measures it would be necessary for me to take in order to become a man of business."

"You! he, he! that's a good one—ask ye pardon—thou'lt make an odd figure behind a counter!"

"A counter, sirrah!" ejaculated Geoffrey.

"Why, how wilt carry on business without a counter, I should like to know? that's a good un, an't it!—thee'st not up to business, I take it."

"It is on that account I apply to you—you, sir, are now in possession of the last remaining property of an ancient family, the castle of my forefathers."

"Four fathers! that's a good one—an't it? now this comes of being of a great old family."

"What, sir!"

"What! why, to ha' four fathers, when I remember it was a joke agen me, as I had ne'er an one."

"Very likely, Mr Pellett; I speak of those from whom this castle came down to me."

"Odds boddikins, I wonder it hadn't come down upon them long ago—he! he! Its a tumble-down piece o' rubbish, and I dare to say, when we comes to overhaul the timbers, they'll be"——

"D—n the timbers, sir! speak to the point, and answer my plain question, how a man like yourself (eyeing the hardware-man somewhat too superciliously) could rise from—from small beginnings into comparative affluence."

"Nothing to be done without a counter, I can tell thee, or without sticking to it—ay sticking to it—I ask ye pardon."

"Psha—with what capital did you start in business, man?"

"Capital!—come that's a good one—hey! I ask ye pardon—thank God, I hadn't a brass sixpence to cross myself with—shouldn't have been here now, buying castles, as thee call'st 'em; no, no—never knew any body do good in business as begun with any thing."

"Why, confound the man!—how could you get a house, a shop, a hovel, without money!"

"Don't ye be angry—ask ye pardon—got first into a good shop."

"But how—how? that's what I want to know."

"How!—Why by sweeping my way."

"Sweeping!—what?"

"The shop, to be sure."

"Take your own way, sir."

"And so I did, and the best way—so on I goes from sweeping to tramping,"

"Tramping!"

"To be sure—tramping a'ter master's customers wi' parcels and suchlike—and doing little odds and ends of 'ommissions."

"Well sir, you seem to have taken your degrees?"

"Degrees! there's no getting on in any other guess manner; so after that, I got on to scraping."

"Making up your capital, I presume?"

"Lord love ye, no such a thing—never thought of capital—always running in thy head—ask ye pardon—scraping my mas-

ter's door, and putting the best leg foremost, as we have it;" which the honest trader illustrated by making a series of very profound flexions of the body.

"And pray, sir," asked the almost exhausted Mr Geoffrey Owen, "what did that do for you?"

"Do! made friends."

"How?"

"By booing and civility."

"Servility, thou meanest"—

"Ye; civility, I mean."

"Your advances were slow at least?"

"Slow—should like to see thee get on as fast—ask ye pardon—I began to climb like smoke."

"Climb! creep, you would say."

"I would say no such thing, for I should lie—ask ye pardon—I climbed to the garret—first housed, then lodged, then fed as shopman."

"That was a jump indeed!" observed Geoffrey rather contemptuously.

"Nothing to the next."

"What! higher than the garret?"

"Higher—a mile—hop, step—and as we has it—from the off side to the near side of the counter."

"In what manner?"

"My own manner, to be sure; master liked my manner—missis liked my manner—customers liked my manner—so they put me on my prefarment, and I riz to be foreman."

"And how didst thou rise above the counter?"

"Above the counter! that's a good un, an't it?—Why, Lord love ye, I couldn't rise higher. It's the nonplush, as we has it—where the dickons would'st thee ha' me go?—There I stuck, for nobody could move me, 'till I growed to it, like a nailed Brummagem; and it's the awkwardest thing in life to me to go without it."

"I mean to ask, how didst thou rise from the situation of a foreman to that of master? For such I presume thou wert."

"Popped into master's shoes."

"By what means?"

"He died one day—popt to his widow—she jumped at it—carried on the concern, and pocketed the old boy's savings as well as my own. He! he! that's a good un, an't it?"

"For thee—a very good one, friend;—I see I shall make no progress in thy school."

"No—don't look cut out for it; can't give ye much encouragement—can't bend thee body enough—too upright."

"I fear so indeed," groaned Geoffrey.

"You maun creep first before you can climb, as we say; besides, too rich, too rich; I beg pardon, he!"

"Dost thou mean to insult my poverty, sir?"

"Oh lud, not I, ask ye pardon; say 'gain too rich."

"Why, sir, I have not fifteen hundred pounds in the world."

"Fifteen hundred! too much, too much; why, ye can't begin sweeping with such a sum in your pocket."

"Sweeping! why thou dar'st not imagine"——

"Oh! not I—beg pardon, don't imagine any such thing; only, if don't begin by sweeping, can't climb after my manner, that's all; and, good luck! all men's not made for all things, as I heard the famous Zekel Platterface, at Redcliffe church, say—you han't the manner, the figure, the"——

"Dost laugh at me, sirrah?"

"Laugh! not I; the Lord love ye—it's no laughing matter, I can tell ye. Wouldn't say nothing to disparage ye; 't isn't thee fault—natur made us as we be—can't all rise to the top;—ben't all born to fortin."

"I wish you good-morning, sir," said Mr Geoffrey, more ruffled than he was wont to be, by a conversation which, it must nevertheless be admitted, required some patience, and unquestionably ended very little to the purpose. He had but a vague notion of business, and had confounded a retailer of small wares with the wholesale merchants of the city, concerning whose respectability he had almost been taught to feel like other men who could not boast a clear descent from Noah. He turned, therefore, upon his heel, rather abruptly, from the little bowing trader, but relapsing into his former train of reflections, which were somewhat apt to run in a circle, he unfortunately stopped before he was out of the reach of the shrill croak of citizen Pellett. That worthy personage was just resuming the task which Geoffrey had interrupted, of giving instructions to a Bristol builder who had accompanied him from town to assist in improving, as he unfortunately termed it, the castle of Cwm Owen. Something had been suggested which he was answering: "Don't mind that, don't mind that at all:—a fig for all orders; shut up shop—done with orders." After a pause, in which the taste of the builder seemed to have started some objection to Mr Pellett's reform, he went on: "Fiddle, nonsense—what d'ye call that here thing yonder?" The answer produced the exclamation—"A moat!—Like enow, I'm sure it's a moat in my eye—good—he! he!—I ask ye—no! I say, fill him up—all but a bit for a fish-pond, under the new bow-winder." After another pause, he exclaimed, in angry response—

"Not taste—fash!—will be a bow-winder—what's character to do wi't it?—an't I character enough?—left off business—can pay

for it—won't be fobbed off—and some of that cross crankum work, like the bars of our jail, painted green all over—and, look ye there, now, I'll have all that here green wood as grows over them tumble-down round houses cut off smack smooth. Don't tell me—can pay for't—will have it—I'll have that here half o' that there crazy castle pulled down, and the other neatly whitewashed, and then it'll look something like."

"Like what!" groaned Geoffrey Owen, and speeded forward out of hearing.

CHAPTER III.

MR Geoffrey Owen, among other agreeable reflections, when retiring in no very pleasant humour from his interview with the new possessor of Cwm Owen, was fearfully reminded that he had no place to retire to, not even a chair on which to sit down, and resolve where to sit next. He started, and by the motion of his foot seemed to be shaking off the last dust of the old property which cleaved to him, and hurried on to a small public-house, at a short distance, still kept by an old tenant of the family; where, shutting himself up in the only sitting-room which the place afforded, he endeavoured to resume the chain of thought to which he had hoped his interview with Mr Pellett might have added a few useful links. Trade, if such were the means to be pursued—and he was as ignorant as a child of any other—he considered now to be wholly out of the question; yet, he wisely felt that he had neither the talents nor the education to qualify him for any profession. What then was to be done?

"That's the question," said he, just as a hack chaise drew up to the door of the alehouse, the horses sweating, the boy grumbling, and the whole equipage completely enveloped in mud; out jumped a little dapper man in a bob wig and a black coat, who might have been sworn to as an attorney, even if he had not declared himself by drawing after him a blue stuff damask bag nearly as large as himself. He looked at his watch, and told the post-boy he must make the horses eat their corn in ten minutes. "I must be at Cardiff by four o'clock."

"The thing's impossible, sir," grumbled the boy; "we be comed two-and-twenty miles over them there da"——

"No swearing or grumbling, you dog; it must be so—it's a case of life and death—so not a word."

"What ool measter say to his horses"——

"Never mind what he says to his horses, they can say nothing to him, you know, sirrah."

"No, your honour, but moy conscience."

"Oh! if nobody tells till that speak, we shall have no tales told; here, you grumbling dog, here's a salve for that."

"Thank your honour, that be all true enow; and if so be the beasts won't eat their corn in ten minutes, that's their fort and none o' mine; so moy conscience is satisfied."

"Well, well, off with you," and in two steps lawyer Flaw was in the elbow-chair by the kitchen fire; he called to the landlord for a tankard of ale, which having emptied, he again applied to his watch, and fidgeted about the room, as if he supposed he could thereby operate upon the minute hand of the cuckoo clock, which dealt out time in the retail of seconds, sixty to the minute, each of which the lawyer seemed to think an hour.

"Plague take the horses!"

"Ot's blut! ye seem in a woundy hurry, Master Flaw," exclaimed the landlord, who had hoped the lawyer would find time to take a snack at least.

"Yes, yes; hurry enough, and be too late after all."

"Why, and what can it argify whether you be at Cardiff an hour later or an hour sooner. Look ye, you're as bad as chuck there, who thinks hur's robbed or murdered too, if hur's five minutes a'ter her time."

"What's your time, Boniface, to mine? You follow; I'm forced to run before it. What can this devil of a post-boy be about? Why, holloa there!"

"Od's life! what time did ye start, Master Flaw?"

"What signifies when I started; two hours ago."

"Look ye, Master Flaw, (grinning to show his wit,) an ye'd started two hours before, ye'd be before your time now."

"Pricked by a hobnail! (muttered lawyer Flaw)—Hey!—for the best of all possible reasons, because I couldn't—detained there—detained here, and every where I think—shall lose my appointment now! Why, holloa, you sluggard, it's two minutes and six seconds past the time." And well might it be; for though the post-boy had salved his conscience as far as the horses were concerned, his own stomach was no party to the transaction; and in order to sooth this voracious companion, he was bestowing upon it, as a share of the bribe, certain portions of toasted cheese and lambs' wool in the tap, whither the ostler, chambermaid, waiter and boots, (all of whom were personified by a plump red-elbowed wench in a striped boddice and petticoat, unhosed and unshod,) had conducted him, unperceived by the impatient lawyer, through the side entrance. At this moment Mr Flaw perceived mine host of the Leek and Gridiron, who had turned

away in contempt from his guest, deliver to his wife sundry little parcels of paper, which bore the appearance of bank-notes. Whisking round, he exclaimed, "Why, Jenkin, man, hast thou money?—ecod I'll make your fortune; if you have fifteen hundred pounds in the world, I'll be the making of you."

"Fifteen hundred pounds, Master Flaw, od's life, no, no, if hur had, ye shouldn't see the Green Griffin dangling and rusting at Cowbridge without a landlord, look ye."

"What *have* you got?—these are notes."

"Small uns, small uns, look ye."

"More's the pity, more's the pity; with fifteen hundred pounds in my hands at this moment, I could build up a man."

"I have fifteen hundred pounds!"

"Who!" exclaimed the lawyer, starting and looking round; for the voice was clearly not in the room.

"Sure the devil," cried Flaw.

"Don't ye say so, master lawyer," exclaimed the landlady, who clearly evinced symptoms of alarm in her own countenance at the exclamation of so knowing a gentleman. She was not aware that any person was in the house except the present company; and began to be afraid the lawyer had his followers. "Don't ye be fritted now, be quiet—hur'll see to the horses hursel,"—and out darted my landlady to expedite the departure of her guest.

"Fritted, nonsense! what voice was that, Jenkin Maw?"

The landlord gave a significant wink, and pointed to the door of the little parlour, which was only separated from the kitchen by a very slight partition.

"Who is it?" whispered the lawyer.

"'Tis the young squire, look ye."

"What squire?"

"What squire! Why *the* squire, odd's blut!"

Now, the lawyer unfortunately knew many squires; but if he had guessed till doomsday, he would never have suspected the bankrupt heir of Cwm Owen of having fifteen hundred pounds to spare. In order, however, to lose no time, or rather not to miss the opportunity, for time was permitted to stand still for the lawyer's own convenience, he again raised his voice, and affecting still to speak to the landlord, though he stood with his face towards the door of the parlour—"It would be a good day's work for the best man in Glamorganshire, who had fifteen hundred pounds at command, and would be willing to advance it." The manœuvre succeeded—the parlour door opened, and Mr Geoffrey Owen, walking up to the lawyer, repeated aloud the words he had uttered in his soliloquy, "I have fifteen hundred pounds!"

"Will you advance it?"

“ For what purpose ? ”

“ Will you make your fortune ? ”

“ Can you doubt it ? ”

“ Will you go this instant to Cardiff with me ? ”

The business was settled in the twinkling of an eye, though neither party had answered a single question put to him. The chaise drove up to the door, in consequence of the good landlady's remonstrances, who began to think her fears realized, when she beheld a third person added to the group. She soon, however, recognized the squire, who, with the lawyer and the blue bag, were seated in an instant, and the crack of the post-boy's whip rapidly set the whole machinery in motion ; and he, being himself duly primed for the expedition, expressed no doubt that his horses were equally disposed to get on cheerfully to the end of their journey. During the drive, Mr Flaw made Mr Geoffrey Owen master of the business to which he hoped to induce him to become a party, and which, to save the pros and cons which naturally arise in a discussion where one man wants fifteen hundred pounds, and would induce another to part with fifteen hundred pounds, it will only be necessary to inform the reader, that a gentleman, who had embarked a considerable property in some neighbouring iron-works, owing to a partial stagnation of trade, was at this moment labouring under some pecuniary difficulties, which, without prompt assistance, would overthrow all his speculations, and eventually bring destruction on himself and his family. An estate in a neighbouring county had been mortgaged, for the purpose of extending the works before mentioned ; and the critical situation of affairs had induced the mortgagee to threaten to foreclose, if the sums due to him were not refunded by a certain day. Mr Gwynn, the gentleman in question, however, had, for several weeks previous to the fatal day of account, collected the whole sum necessary for the discharge of the debt, with the exception of about fifteen hundred pounds, which he considered a sum too trifling to be the occasion of any anxiety, and doubted not that in a few days it might be obtained without difficulty ; but he was unfortunately mistaken in his calculations. The rumour of his embarrassments had been carefully circulated by the mortgagee, who had been his *very* particular friend, and therefore naturally wished to prove him as much in the wrong as possible, in order to justify his own desertion of him. Strange as it may appear to the philanthropist in his closet, the world, with all its benevolence, is very apt to withhold its assistance, not from those to whom it would be of no service, but almost invariably from those whom it might save from perdition. The nearer an unfortunate devil approaches to his ruin, the further do those who by their

aid might redeem him, retire from him. This is very curious, but it is very common; and I have not time to investigate the cause of this phenomenon. Suffice it to say, that Mr Gwynn had an experimental proof of it; and he who, a few months before, might have raised fifty thousand pounds upon his personal security, was now in a fair way of being overwhelmed for want of fifteen hundred pounds on any security whatever. Lawyer Flaw, who had been employed as one of his agents, had scoured the country in vain, and was returning in the forlorn hope of raising the money, at most usurious interest, from the sordid savings of an old smuggler, a dealer in marine stores, and a vender of patent medicines at Cardiff, when fortune, in one of her freaks, placed a paper partition only between the said lawyer and Mr Geoffrey Owen, who was perhaps the single individual in the whole country who was not, by this time, in possession of the secret of Mr Gwynn's embarrassments.

He listened with all possible attention to the lawyer's communications, and ever and anon felt his side pocket, to ascertain whether the book containing his fortune was still safe and secure. It is true he had imbibed certain prejudices respecting the profession of the law, which, if they did not go to the full extent of those entertained by my landlady at the Leak and Gridiron, certainly induced doubts as to the safety of such a sum as fifteen hundred pounds shut up within so narrow a space as a post-chaise, and in such close contact with a lawyer. In the present case, this illiberal prejudice was of some use to Mr Geoffrey; for, in truth, lawyer Flaw (from a feeling of friendship, no doubt, to his employer, and the inclination to gain credit for the same) had, for some time, been endeavouring to convince his companion that it would be advisable to close the transaction, as one of a merely confidential nature between themselves—that Geoffrey should advance the money, and receive Flaw's note of hand, bearing lawful interest from the date thereof. I have before said that our friend Geoffrey was not of a speculative turn of mind; he could go very well before the wind; but if you proposed tacking, the vessel (his mind, observe me) would certainly have *missed stays*. Now, he remembered that the lawyer had said that the advance of fifteen hundred pounds would be the making of him who should be able and willing to produce it. When the lawyer, therefore, in a speech that extended at least from the third to the ninth milestone, had turned the subject in so many ways, and so completely bothered the whole question, that any clever man might have fallen, like the Indian bird we read of, into the charmer's mouth, as a refuge from the difficulty of extricating himself from his fascinations, he made no single impression upon our friend Geoffrey's mind.

This may be accounted for in two ways; first, from his aforesaid dread of a lawyer, and his anxiety to watch the treasure of which he thought himself an inadequate guard; and secondly, because his ideas revolved in a circle, from which they never deviated, or could be diverted. I do not pretend to say which of these considerations operated upon him; but when the lawyer coughed and wiped his mouth, in concluding a very learned and somewhat intricate address, Geoffrey was just at the point of the business where it had been first started. The whole might have been contained in a nut-shell. He simply adverted to the fact, and demanded of Mr Flaw, what were the advantages to be derived from advancing the money.

"Advantages! why surely, my dear sir, five per cent interest—safe as the Bank of England—payable half yearly, in times like these, are advantages"——

"Which cannot amount to making a man's fortune," interrupted Geoffrey.

"Not precisely that, to be sure."

"But I am sure you said so."

"I might say something like it, but you see, my dear sir, I will put the case again; we will suppose A the borrower, and B"——

"I don't care sixpence about A and B, Mr Flaw; I don't want to go to my A B C at my age; only tell me how is a man to make his fortune by lending his money at five per cent."

"Why, my dear sir, you wouldn't lend your money usuriously, *contra statutum, anno Dom*"——

"I don't want to lend my money at all," retorted Geoffrey, folding his great-coat double over his side pocket. "I will trouble you to set me down at the Cardiff Arms."

"Bless me, my good Mr Owen, it does not follow, that because we haven't hit off an arrangement at a heat, that something may not still be done."

In short, the lawyer, who had pozed half a dozen dashers in half the distance, was fairly thrown out by the matter-of-fact tenaciousness of his companion, and finding that he could not make the best bargain, resolved to make the best in his power. Changing his tone, therefore, he began by suggesting (as if the idea had struck him on the moment) that perhaps the whole business might be better arranged by a meeting between Mr Gwynn and Mr Geoffrey Owen himself.

"It is curious," said he, "this did not occur to me before."

"It occurred to me from the beginning," replied Geoffrey.

"Indeed! then why, my dear sir, did you not mention it? it would have saved much time, and all the"——

"That's of no consequence, Mr Flaw, we could not have arrived here sooner, and I never enter into long discussions."

So, rattling into the town of Cardiff, all further conversation ceased between the travellers. They alighted at the inn, where they found Mr Gwynn most anxiously awaiting the arrival of the lawyer, who, after whispering in his ear a few words, introduced Mr Geoffrey Owen to that gentleman as one who was both able and willing to assist him with the sum necessary for his service. The parties immediately proceeded to business, which was not, however, quite so rapidly settled as appeared consistent with the notions of lawyer Flaw. He had practically benefited from the old observation, that business begun in haste is business to do over again; and in this way counsellor Doublefee and himself had carried on a joint concern for some years with admirable success, and no little emolument. After a variety of preliminary conversation, each of the parties appeared to be as shy of entering directly upon the subject as if it had been proposed to draw lots which of them should be flogged or transported. The hand of the clock was at the hour of five, and by twelve o'clock that night the fate of Mr Gwynn was to be decided. Yet the hand kept advancing towards six, without one single point of importance having been ascertained. Mr Geoffrey, indeed, had admitted (and, if we might judge from appearances, began to repent him of the admission) that he had fifteen hundred pounds about him; and lawyer Flaw had enlarged upon the mutual good fortune of the parties in the happy coincidence which had brought them together. Still both appeared to stand upon the defensive, and to be ready to ward off the first blow that was struck. At length the lawyer, who was seldom at a loss when an expedient was necessary, looking at the clock, exclaimed—

“Bless my soul, gentlemen, have you dined?” To which, receiving a negative from both parties, the bell was rung, the bill of fare produced, and a beef-steak ordered without delay.

“Nothing in this country, (observed the lawyer, with a facetious look at Mr Gwynn,) nothing to be done without eating, ay, and drinking too—it’s the rosin to the bow—there is no fiddling without it. While dinner is getting ready, I will just step down to the office and get some papers which may be necessary.”

“Do so,” said Mr Gwynn, who, it must be confessed, appeared to be as well pleased as Geoffrey at the retreat of the lawyer.

“I hate a lawyer, Mr Gwynn,” said our friend Geoffrey, the moment he had turned his back.

“Nay, sir,” said Mr Gwynn. “they are a necessary evil; we can’t do without them.”

“Honest men may, I think, sir.”

“How?”

"By fairly stating their own case, and coming to the point at once."

"Ay; but how is business to be carried on?"

"Why, what have you or I to do with a lawyer, if we can arrange matters between ourselves, I should like to know, Mr Gwynn? To be sure, he has talked and talked, and argued and pleaded for fourteen long miles, and I suppose you must pay him for it. That's all very well for his business; but I can't see any thing it has to do with yours or mine."

"He has told you, sir?" said Mr Gwynn with an enquiring look.

"Yes," replied Geoffrey, "in about five minutes he told me all that was necessary for me to know, and after that I never attended to a word he said."

"Then, sir, you are aware of the urgency of this business?"

"I am, sir; and shall be happy if I can be of so essential a service to you as he represents I may be, provided my money be secured to me; for I have no hesitation in telling you that this fifteen hundred pounds is the whole of my possessions in this world."

"The security is undeniable, and shall be proved so to your satisfaction; but believe me, sir, an obligation of this nature, and under such circumstances, is one that I shall not slightly incur."

"Your agent talked of the advantages which might be derived from this transaction, but when I heard your story"—

"Nay, sir, it is to those advantages that I would speak. You are my guardian angel; fifteen hundred pounds to me, at this moment, are worth more than ten times the sum at any other period of my life. It will save me from disgrace, and my family from eventual ruin. My speculations are not of any vague nature; they are founded upon sure and certain principles; but if broken in upon at such a moment as the present—which they must be without your intervention, for I acknowledge I am now without any other resource—it cannot, and will not, return five shillings in the pound to the creditors, and must utterly destroy the whole concern."

Geoffrey was a matter-of-fact man; but this steadiness of the head was sometimes a little ruffled by the pulsations of the heart. It was a warm one, when rudely or when tenderly appealed to. He could not see the agitation of Mr Gwynn without something like a corresponding feeling; and stretching across the table he squeezed the hand of that gentleman, and without uttering a word, unloosed all the fastenings, and coverings, and flaps, which had been multiplied round his pocket-book to guard it from the lawyer, and taking out notes to the

amount of fifteen hundred pounds, enclosed them in the hand, which he now pressed the closer, as a sort of warning no doubt, at the same time whispering, "The devil take the lawyer now."

"This is too much, Mr Owen; you know little of me." Here he was interrupted by something that in a woman would have shown itself at the eyes, but which, in this gentleman, proceeded no further than the mouth, which, strange to say, perfectly disqualified him from going on with the sentence he had begun.

"Say nothing about it, Mr Gwynn," replied Geoffrey, whose utterance was more tremulous than it had been in any part of his conversation with the lawyer, "say nothing about it. If I were to loose it, it would leave me in a little worse situation than I am; but I know I shall gain by it, for I am a Christian, Mr Gwynn, and I feel that I am repaid already. But you are mistaken, sir, in saying I don't know you. I have known you long, and have known you through the report of those who ought to be ashamed of themselves for yielding the satisfaction to almost a stranger which they might have enjoyed themselves."

"Sir, you astonish me," cried Mr Gwynn; "why have we not known each other better. I am overpowered, and incapable of expressing a hundredth part of what I feel at my heart in this trying moment; but I must collect myself to speak to the point. In the arrangement I proposed to my lawyer"—

"No more of the lawyer, if we are to be friends," cried Geoffrey.

"Well, then, my good and kind benefactor, the arrangement I proposed for the person who should extricate me from my present embarrassment, including, of course, the legal interest of the debt for the few months it may be necessary to remain one, is a sort of co-partnership in these iron-works, in which I hold eleven of the sixteen shares of which the concern consists. I did propose, in return for the advantage of this loan, that one of my shares should be made over, not as security, but in perpetuity, to the person."

"Nay, Mr Gwynn, I cannot take advantage of your distresses."

"It was not in the contemplation of meeting with such a man as you, my best friend, that I entertained such a proposition. No; the arrangement must stand upon other grounds. Are you—pardon the question, if it is an impertinent one—are you too proud to embark in what may certainly be fairly called trade? Is the respect for your ancient race"—

"My ancient race, Mr Gwynn! What has it done for me? Has it not, like the race of locusts or caterpillars, consumed the whole of the possessions that ought to have been mine? No,

sir, I am not above trade, nor any line of life in which my honour and honesty may not be compromised."

"Nobly said, my good sir, and no sooner said than done; you must share in the good fortune which your timely aid will, beyond a doubt, secure to me and mine. I will explain my plans more fully hereafter."

"Sir," said Geoffrey, "I scarcely know what to answer."

"You have only to answer, *Yes*, and do as I would have you. The money you have thus liberally advanced for my necessities shall be secured beyond the reach of speculations; but when every thing is clear and obvious to you, you may embark it in the general concern, and claim that independent interest in it to which you are so fully entitled."

Never surely did a kind action recoil more favourably upon the actor than in the present instance; nor was it possible for a man whose head in the morning was racked for the means of husbanding a small fortune, so as to eke it out into a pittance for the remainder of his life, so pleasantly cured in the afternoon, by depositing it according—not, indeed, to any rule of Cocker or Dilworth, but to that golden rule which is to be found in a larger and thicker volume than either of the treatises of the aforesaid authors.

The conversation had just arrived at this interesting point, in which Mr Geoffrey Owen might have been embarrassed to express all that he felt he ought to say, when the bustling lawyer and the beef-steak entered severally at the two doors of the apartment.

"Ay, now," exclaimed he, "this is as it should be—I couldn't get back before," looking significantly at Mr Gwynn; "torn to pieces with business—Mr Flaw here, Mr Flaw there—such an arrear of toil, if one is but absent for a day. Shall I help you, Mr Owen, pray? Gravy? A capital steak. Here, landlord! a bottle of the old port, you know—number 9," winking at Boniface; "particular friend of mine. A happy thought, gentlemen, this dinner—it's the finest clearer for business. Here—a glass of wine, Mr Owen—Sir, your very good health."

In short, Mr Flaw did the honours of the table, and spoke for all three; for neither of the gentlemen seemed disposed to take any share of the department from him. This appeared to him quite natural, and in the ordinary course of business.

When the cloth was removed and the waiter withdrawn, the lawyer began to push about the bottle—proposed two or three facetious toasts—enlarged upon the merits of his friend, mine host, and his *peculium*, or inner cellar of choice beverage for favoured guests. At length, considering the favourable opportunity arrived, when the door of the heart is supposed to be left

ajar by the influx of the generous juice of the grape, he arose from the table, and taking up the blue bag, more than once alluded to in the course of this history, carefully selected divers packages of parchment and papers, duly docketed, and neatly bound with red tape. Having wiped his spectacles—filled out another glass of wine—drawn his chair close to the table—disposed his packets in regular order—filled his pen with ink—hemmed three times, in note of preparation for an intended statement of the case—and duly rubbed his hands,—he thus began:—

“It is necessary, my dear sirs, in taking a view of the case before us, to consider, in their due form and order, the several heads under which the law doth recognise transactions of this nature.—Now, gentlemen—hem!—we must treat the question before us, I should humbly opine, as one of annuity granted either out of corporeal or incorporeal hereditaments—and must rest it upon the final terms, conditions, and covenants which A the lender and B the borrower may find to be most satisfactory severally to the parties interested. It is necessary, gentlemen—hem!—it is necessary that a due and clear distinction be made between what we call an annuity and a rent-charge—though, as Blackstone, if I recollect right, admits that they are too often confounded.”

“So much the better for the law of the case, Mr Flaw,” smiled Mr Geoffrey.

“Good—very good—always a joke at the expense of the law. Well, well—we retort in our own way; but ye can’t do without us, ye know ye can’t,” with a knowing wink at Mr Gwynn.—“Well, gentlemen, as I was saying—indeed, Mr Owen, you must not give way to your wit upon this occasion—Ha! ha!—Pray help yourself to another glass. You see, gentlemen, there is this palpable distinction between a rent-charge and an annuity, as I was before observing—the one being imposed upon and issuing out of lands, the other being a yearly sum chargeable solely upon the person of the granter. You may smile, gentlemen, but you must not interrupt the court. Time advances,” looking at the clock, “and we have a world of business to do in a very short time.”

“Time enough, Mr Flaw, and to spare,” retorted Mr Geoffrey.

“Bless my soul, Mr Owen, you are not aware of the forms that”——

“Nor have I the least wish to become acquainted with them.”

“Why, how, my good Mr Owen, is business to be carried on without them?”

“Better, I conceive, than with them.”

“Sir, I maintain it is impossible—utterly impossible. How

is the transfer to be made—how are the securities to be ascertained—how are the deeds to be drawn—the”——

“There is no occasion for them.”

“No occasion for deeds, transfers, securities? Why, sir, I was to blame—the port has overdone its duty. This second bottle has ruined us. The landlord has put brandy or opium, or the devil knows what, into his cursed mixture.—Surely, surely you’ll be advised before you take such a step.”

“What, Mr Flaw—by the lawyer of the other party?”

“Yes, sir—I’ll stake my reputation to a thousand pounds.”

“A valuable consideration for such a deposit, Mr Flaw,” said Mr Gwynn, to whom Geoffrey Owen had communicated the by-proposition in the post-chaise.

“Gentlemen, I must say this is extraordinary conduct, in you especially, Mr Gwynn. I can only attribute it to this infernal mixture, which has certainly disturbed your intellect.—Do you mean, sir, to advance the sum required?” addressing himself to Mr Owen.

“That question is decided, sir—it is no longer in my own power.”

“Not in your power! Do you retract, sir?”

“By no means,” answered Geoffrey. “I mean to say, it is no longer in my possession—Mr Gwynn has the money.”

“Has the money! Good,” said the lawyer, with a significant smile to his employer;—“good. What a pity, then, that the business had not been settled before dinner.”

“It was, Mr Flaw.”

“What!—You are trifling with me, sir.”

“Upon my word, sir, I am not. Mr Gwynn will inform you that he has signed and sealed fasting, so that we may be allowed to distrust our intellects a little now.”

“Signed and sealed!”

“Signed, sealed, and registered!”

“Why, where are the papers? By George, gentlemen, ’twill never hold good in law. Let me see—you have been too hasty—what, in my absence! Come, come, let me try if I can rectify it—time wears apace.”

“Why, my good sir,” cried Geoffrey, “your speech, if we may judge from the opening, and your references, if we may judge by their bulk,” (pointing to aforesaid neatly bound documents on the table,) “would have lasted till to-morrow noon.”

“Ay, but that makes all the difference:—the delays of law are the security of the client.”

“I prefer the security I have already got, Mr Flaw,” said Geoffrey.

"Why, sir, it will hold good in no court—no, sir, in no court in"——

"Yes, Mr Flaw—in one court, where, however, I believe your practice is not very considerable—so that, you perceive, I have reason to be satisfied, or, which is the same thing, I am satisfied,—and I believe Mr Gwynn is satisfied; and therefore nothing remains but to send for the agent of the other party—pay the money, and"——

"Yes," said Mr Gwynn, "we have nothing further to do than to require the attendance of Mr Corbett's man of business—which I shall be obliged to Mr Flaw to"——

"I, sir! I'll see you—I'll have no hand in such a precious piece of business. I foresee my services will be soon wanted.—In the mean time, I wash my hands of it, gentlemen—I wash my hands of it," collecting his books and papers, and thrusting them into the bag. "Mark me, I declare you have acted without, and in opposition to my advice, counsel, and opinion."

"We agree," exclaimed Geoffrey, (rubbing his hands with most provoking good-humour :) "you are perfectly right, the note of hand you proposed"——

"Psha! sir, I cannot stop to—to—to—I disclaim the whole transaction—'tis idiocy, madness; and you, Mister Gwynn—you, sir, will rue the day when you betook yourself from the shadow of my wing, as I may say—but I am torn and worried with other business, in which my opinion, my counsel, and my judgment will be better appreciated."

"If you put your own price upon them."

"None of your reflections, Mr Geoffrey Owen—none of your reflections upon the practice of a professional"——

"Not upon the note of hand?"

"No, sir—not upon—good-evening, gentlemen—mind—mark, I repeat, you'll live to repent this usage." What followed was indistinctly heard, as, with the action suited to the word, he pulled the door of the room after him with a sound like the report of artillery. Mr Gwynn and Mr Geoffrey Owen resumed their seats, and came to an understanding in a few minutes, when they despatched a messenger to the agent employed by the creditor of the former gentleman, and before twelve o'clock every thing was settled and arranged to the complete satisfaction of all parties, except lawyer Flaw.

CHAPTER IV.

At an early hour the next morning, Mr Geoffrey accompanied his happy companion to his house in the neighbourhood, whom he introduced, as his best friend—a friend in need—to his smiling wife, and a daughter who, if not as beautiful as a heroine in romance, was as pretty a girl as any within the picturesque vale of the Taff.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that a friendship thus commenced, ripened very rapidly into a warm and lasting union of interests. The speculations of Mr Gwynn were successful even beyond his utmost hopes, and in a few years he was considered (in spite of lawyer Flaw's denunciations and prognostics) one of the largest capitalists in the county of Glamorgan. It is not to be supposed that his gratitude towards his friend Owen diminished, as the increasing benefit of his interference displayed itself, although there had been instances in this best of all possible worlds, of men, in the heyday of prosperity and fortune, kicking most furiously against the ladder by which their young ambition had been taught to climb. Geoffrey had every reason, and every disposition, to bear a very different testimony to the conduct of Mr Gwynn. His share in the extensive works carried on under the eye of Mr Gwynn afforded him an ample independence, to which was added, a considerable marriage portion on his union with Miss Grace Gwynn, which took place about four years after the scene we have lately witnessed at Cardiff. Many years afterwards, when time, who pays no respect to persons, and very little to things, had given to Mr Gwynn many significant hints that he had other business to think of, and other accounts to settle, than those of his iron-works, (which hints, by-the-by, are generally not so well taken as intended,) he resigned the concern into the hands of his two sons and a nephew, leaving Geoffrey at the head of the firm. The latter, however, being now himself advanced in life, and averse to act with new allies, contented himself with the agency of the concern, and sitting down on a small estate, which he had purchased in the neighbourhood of Bristol, began to enjoy that ease of mind, which freedom from the details of business, and a competency equal to the rational enjoyments of life, are so well calculated to afford. His wife, an amiable and excellent woman, though somewhat too proud, perhaps, of the antiquity of her husband's family, (on which account offence had been taken by certain of her Bristol connexions,) died a few years after his retirement. She left two sons, one fourteen years of age, the second a year younger. The eldest, Griffith,

who had been indulged by the mother rather more than was quite consistent with her duty and affection for him, had early contracted habits of indolence and self-indulgence, which baffled the efforts of his instructors to bring him under any regulated system of education. He was destined to redeem the disgrace entailed upon the family by his father's dereliction of principle in becoming even subsidiary to a trading concern—and although the fortunes of the Cwm Owen race could have been restored by no other means short of a miracle, these were to be kept as much as possible out of sight, and the heir to be insulated from all suspicion of any concern whatever with the dirty works in Glamorganshire. Both boys were, however, placed together at a school about seven miles from their home—and to do Geoffrey justice, he directed that no distinction should be made in the mode of their education. The result, however, was very different upon the disposition of the two lads—Caleb, the younger, was always regular in his duty—prepared with his lesson—and punctual in his attendance in school. Griffith never in time—substituted one lesson for another, and was always out of the way when called for; there was however, no defect of intellect, nor any deficiency of parts; at times he would carry off all the prizes given in the school—at others, no inducement or correction was strong enough to rouse him to exertion. Caleb, on the contrary, never was known to obtain a prize, and it is said he never tried for one—he was very justly what the master called a good regular boy; but his brother Griffith, in an evil hour, overheard the pedagogue observe to a friend that “the boy was a genius,” and that “his eccentricities must be winked at, in order that this gift might not be injured by too close pruning.” From that fatal period, Griffith found a plea for all sorts of irregularity; and the checks applied by the master, having the effect of water sprinkled on a flame, kept him perpetually on the alert to do something singular, or to say something ridiculous. He is reported, within a week of the above proclamation of his genius, to have sown mustard and cress in the learned proclaimer's cauliflower wig, to try the effect of animal heat upon vegetation, on which account he narrowly escaped a flogging, (being considered by the pedagogue too much of a practical and personal joke even for a flight of genius,) but was acquitted on the interference of some judicious friends, who considered his fault venial, as a precocious indication of his love for experimental philosophy. He was at another time found guilty of tying up one of the hinder legs of his master's pad, in order to ascertain whether nature had not taken unnecessary trouble in making quadrupeds, when tripeds would (as he had proved to his own satisfaction on paper) fully have answered the purpose—an experiment which nearly proved fatal

to the schoolmaster, who, having little knowledge of horse-flesh, mounted the animal without looking, as a jockey would have done, at the parts of his horse; and finding it immovable, began to dig in his spurs, and belabour the poor animal, who at last plunging forward in despair, lodged the unwigged and unseated rider in a fish-pond which lay conveniently at hand. In short, Griffith's mind was perpetually at work to undo all that experience had put her seal upon, and to do every thing that was to be done by any means rather than those which had hitherto been employed for the purpose. He neglected all his regular studies for the purpose of devouring manuals of chemistry and *vade mecums* of natural history. He sold a *princeps editio* of Horace to purchase "The Wonders of the Microscope," and nearly incurred expulsion for purloining "Wiseman's Conjuring Cap" from an old woman who was reputed a witch in the neighbourhood. At length, when the period arrived for the two brothers to leave school, Caleb had gained all that was necessary to qualify him to succeed his father in business; Griffith little or nothing of that which had been provided for him, and was destined to carry him through Oxford—the finishing polish to his education, which had in fact been scarcely begun. He had not been idle, indeed, but his own researches had formed his head into something which may be likened unto the laboratory of the royal institution after an experimental lecture—where a variety of materials sufficient for future use may be left, but which are so scattered, dispersed, and mixed with exploded carcasses, that the sub-operator has scarcely time to arrange them against the next exhibition. Now Griffith, unfortunately, had no sub-operator; he had deranged his cranio-logical laboratory in such a manner that it would have been no easy matter to form any arrangement of the materials, were even a Davy himself at hand to superintend, class, and arrange the heterogeneous *melange*.

Griffith was removed to the university at the age of nineteen, where he was distinguished as an odd genius, who did nothing, whilst, in fact, he was more sedulously employed than half the reading men of his college. He had conciliated one of the librarians of the Bodleian, and feasted upon many a chained volume, which had for centuries ceased to hold communion with readers of any description; and the Ashmolean Museum, if not presenting the very best collections that Europe, or even England affords, offered to his view a treasure on which he devoutly bestowed a considerable portion of his time. The circle of his acquaintance was large, and he courted the favour of the professors in the various branches of science. He was a stranger alone to his own tutor, and absent only from the lectures of his

own house. The professor of astronomy declared, in all companies, that he had the enterprising spirit of a Galileo—the chemical chair spoke of him as a rising Lavoisier. In mineralogy and geology, he was considered an aspiring genius; and the reader of the class of natural philosophy felt himself pozed by the extraordinary and eccentric enquiries of this unfledged tyro; whilst his college tutor summed up the whole by declaring him to be the arrantest blockhead of his standing in the university. With these contradictory testimonials, Griffith returned to the paternal roof without having taken a degree, which was abhorrent from a mind self-trained to condemn every thing that implied order or regularity; and his genius now began to expand itself with less restraint than the discipline of a scholastic education had hitherto permitted. Geoffrey Owen was a most indulgent father; and the heir was licensed in all his whims by that worthy gentleman, who very wisely inferred that this activity of mind and pursuit in a young man, who, by a decree to which he had sworn obedience, was predestined to do nothing, would exclude that evil companion, called by the more polished members of society *ennui*, and illustrated by the wise man as the root of all evil.

It is true, he is reported to have expressed something more than astonishment at finding a spare room, which he had offered to a friend, filled with stoves, alembics, and retorts—and once lost that evenness of temper for which he was remarkable, upon finding part of a human subject, half a horse, and some fragments of a hippopotamus, from the South Seas, scattered about the state dining-room, previous to an experiment for ascertaining the comparative merits of each, as the basis of improved spermaceti. A transfer of the manufactory to an old laundry, however, restored peace; and, with the exception of a trial in hydraulics, which had nearly occasioned a second deluge, as a new date for the re-edification of the family genealogy, the worthy Geoffrey had little to complain of during the remainder of his life. He was gathered to his fathers before his son had reached his twenty-seventh year, who, though never deficient in due attention, and even affection, to his parents, where the paramount claims of science did not supersede his duty towards them, could hardly be prevailed upon to forego an experiment, founded on some certain indications derived from an ancient manuscript on the manufacture of cerecloths, said to have been preserved in the family by a branch of the Owens, contemporary with the first discoverer of the Pissasphaltum; and it was not without a severe struggle on the part of his brother Caleb, and other ignorant and unscientific relatives, that the good old gentleman was rolled up in the usual allowance of flannel, instead of being

deposited in his son's museum, to be hereafter purchased by some brother virtuoso as a preserved mummy from the caves of Saccara !

CHAPTER V.

THE young squire's house now became the temple of science, and the resort of all who had any project to propose, any experiment to make, or had become adepts in the art of modern alchemy, or, to speak plainer, who had discovered the means of extracting gold from the pockets of those who esteemed it no more than the dross and rubbish with which the crucibles of a former age had been supplied. Before he had arrived at the age of thirty, he had set afloat seven advertising venders of specifics, eleven projectors, whose schemes for liquidating the national debt and discovering the longitude, were considered, in succession, not only feasible but infallible, and no less than thirty political economists, who had discovered the means of spreading universal plenty over the land, by a process which should cost nothing, but the first expense of setting their several wheels in motion. This, of course, was to be defrayed by the patron, who would have contributed, no doubt, had he lived at so late a period, to that astonishing and profound speculation of his illustrious namesake in the north, who has discovered that nothing is wanting to the peace and independence of society, but the suppression of Christianity, and a reform in the mode of creating men's hearts. We have all heard of bigots and tyrants who would enforce their own peculiar form of worship at the point of the sword ; but to suppress all religious sentiment by a legislative decree, is a novelty in tyranny, which has been reserved for the enlightened period of the nineteenth century, under the reign of philanthropy and universal benevolence. In short, Mr Owen (not he of Lanark, but of Cwm Owen) was perhaps one of the most active men of his day—he scarcely allowed himself the necessary periods of rest and refection—he may be said to have run himself fairly out of breath in the pursuit of literary and philosophical improvement ; and in this sort of flight the cares of his household were, of course, of too ordinary a nature to be noticed, even in a pause or a parenthesis ; so that the ample fortune amassed by the prudent industry of his father, (an alien from the hereditary spirit of the family,) was rapidly declining towards that gulf which had swallowed up its predecessor in the *right line*. He arrived at the age of forty without

ever once having turned his thoughts to matrimony, and probably would have left the world without any direct heirs to transmit his name and genius to a future age, had he not encountered a lady where he was searching for a sacred utensil, said to have belonged to the emperor Vespasian, at a particular crisis in his reign when his son Titus received a rap on the knuckles from his imperial father, as we who are learned in ancient history all very well remember. The possessor had demanded a true antiquarian price for this rare piece of antiquity; and the lady appeared to be negotiating for it with that insinuating address which the sternest trader is not always able to resist, when Griffith burst into the sanctum out of breath, holding a letter in his hand which he had that morning received in the country, the contents of which had occasioned him, at the risk of his neck, to gallop to the repository of this antique treasure. This was in one of the darkest and most obscure alleys of the busy and bustling city of Bristol. Now, as histories are not intended to amuse, so much as to instruct, (which may be learned from many of the publications of the present day,) I think it fair and just, when the opportunity presents itself, to assist my readers with the result of my own experience and industry, so as effectually to guard them against the vile arts and deceptive manoeuvres of dishonest men, who prey upon the failings of mankind, especially those who ride hobby-horses. Be it known, then, that the possessor of the Vespasian treasure acted the part of broker alone upon the present occasion, and was contented with a certain per-centage upon the sale from its real owner, a philosopher, antiquarian, and bosom friend of Mr Griffith Owen, who, like a trooper at Astley's, rode many (hobby) horses at one and the same time, although perhaps not quite so skilfully. This person had purchased the article in question out of an old smelting-house in the neighbourhood, where, in its original form, from long use, it had suffered so much as to be declared unfit for further service. Wishing to turn it to the best account, and knowing his man, not by hearsay, but by long experience, he had sent an express to his dear friend, Mr Owen, to inform him of the news, which, he added, had that moment reached him; and as this philosophical gentleman had a female dependant, whose portion was rather scanty, arising solely out of the discretionary bounty of her patron, she was directed to take her station, and be ready to contend for the prize, should the competitor appear, as he entertained no doubt he would, in the person of that gentleman.

"That vase is mine!" exclaimed Griffith, when he had recovered breath sufficient to speak. "It is mine, Mr Vamp—a friend has secured it for me."

"Madam," said Mr Vamp, simpering and bowing to the lady, "what am I to say?"

"I will give you the money, sir," replied she.

"Money,—sir!—Madam," cried Griffith, "permit me—what possible use can you have for this?"

"This what, sir?"

"This—piece of antiquity.

"Use, sir!—we seldom refer to the use of that which we regard merely as a matter of taste."

"Taste, madam—taste. What has this—my dear madam, pardon me—I am not unknown to this gentleman—I have a museum—I have cabinets of anatomy, ornithology, mineralogy, geology—I have a *hortus siccus*, that might raise a Dryander from the grave—and such wardrobes from Otaheite, Owhyhee, and the Sandwiches, as would astonish even a Cook or a Solander.—There is not an animal, vegetable, or mineral, from the poles to the equator, in either hemisphere, of which I have not dried specimens *ad infinitum*. I have a Herculean dining-parlour—a vestibule furnished from Palmyra—and a complete set of Lares and Penates from Numa to Constantine. I have bottled specimens of embryos—calves with two heads, and statues with none—torsos without number—and three Herculean feet, which are traced to a statue known to have existed in the times of the Titans at Ceuta. I have, I have!"

"But, my good sir," answered the lady, with well-dressed features of surprise, "what has this catalogue of your possessions to do with the question? Your riches show that you need no more, whilst I, a humble collector, with only a half-formed museum, and incipient cabinets!"

"Half-formed museum!—Why, madam, are you really a collector?"

"What should prevent it, sir?"

"Oh then, madam, you'll pardon me—all delicacy is at an end—collectors, whatever their sex, age, or degree, stand upon a footing of equality.—The vase is mine, sir—name your price," turning to honest Mr Vamp.

"Madam," said the keeper of the treasure, "what am I to do?"

"To do, sir!—you know your duty," replied the lady, with a toss of her head.—"I had, before this gentleman entered the shop, agreed to your price."

"Name it, sir—name it!" exclaimed Griffith.

"The lady agreed to pay seventy guineas for it."

"Seventy!—I'll double the sum. There now," taking out his pocket-book.

"The vase is mine, you will recollect, Mr Vamp," coolly observed the lady.

"What, madam, when I am ready," cried Griffith, "to pay down double?"

"Surely, sir, it must be optional with me whether I shall part with that which is my own property."

"What is this?" roared poor Griffith. "Do you mean to say," turning to that excellent actor, Mr Vamp, "this lady is actually the purchaser—the proprietor—the owner of the vase?"

"I really, sir, do not see, unless the lady is disposed to relinquish the bargain, what further I can do?"

"You will, Mr Vamp," said the lady, "be careful of the sacred deposit—and I will call for it in my carriage an hour hence.—Be sure you do not trust it out of your sight."

"Why, madam, madam!" exclaimed the tortured Griffith, "you will not be deaf to my entreaties. There is nothing in the vast collection I have described to you—nothing I possess in books, prints, natural history, physiology, antiquities, or mineralogy, that I am not ready to exchange with you for this—this most invaluable"——

"Invaluable to me it is, sir—and it is not in my power to put you in possession of that which is dearer to me than all you have to offer."

"But, madam, listen to me. If not in exchange—let me at least know if there is any price which will tempt you to transfer this"——

"You forget, my good sir, that the same zeal which animates you is equally alive in me."

"Hey—what!—is it possible?—a woman!"——

"And why not, sir?"

"Will you not part with it—my dear good lady?"

"I grieve to refuse you, sir—but, under the present circumstances, it is out of my power"——

"Madam, answer me one question—Are you married or single?"

"The question is rather extraordinary, I must confess, sir; but Mr Vamp is perfectly acquainted with my family, and with my situation—it will at least be more delicate to spare me the trouble of cross-examination from a perfect stranger." So saying, she renewed her injunctions to Mr Vamp—and, slightly curtsying to Griffith, left the shop.

Owen followed her with his eyes till she had turned the corner of the alley, and was fairly out of sight. He sighed aloud, and murmured something which was not intended to be heard—and therefore ought not to be wantonly exposed to every idle reader, who might, from his or her ignorance of all the facts of the case, set down Mr Griffith Owen as an ungallant man, which was by no means the case—as will, I think, be hereafter sufficiently

proved. He reverted again to the precious vase—turned it in all directions—rubbed it—held it to the light—smelled to it—ejaculated something about taste, and then groaned in spirit.

“Who is this—lady?” at length demanded he of the obsequious Mr Vamp.

“The lady, sir!—is Miss Amarantha Philpot”——

“Amarantha Philpot! What is she—where does she live—how does she live—who are her friends—what is her family?”

“Indeed, sir, I cannot answer all your questions; but I believe she is a connexion of Dr Wintletrap.”

“Of Dr Wintletrap!—why didn’t you say so before?—’twas he who sent me here. Hey, then, all’s safe!” And off ran Griffith, leaving his gloves and pocket-book behind him, which in his haste he had totally forgotten. Having found Dr Wintletrap at home, he hastily interrogated him respecting the lady—detailed the misery of his situation, and the hopelessness, without the good doctor’s interference, of ever becoming possessed of this treasure of treasures. The doctor, who was not an inferior actor to his deputies, Miss Amarantha and Mr Vamp, began by expressing his astonishment at his relation’s having made the discovery, and concluded by some reflections upon the fidelity of the shopkeeper. Griffith was on his antiquarian hobby, or he would have discovered that the supposed vender could have no reason for being unfaithful, as he would naturally have been disposed to make as much of the treasure (had it really been his) as the competition was likely to produce; nay, we even who are in the secret might be puzzled to know why, as he was to have a per-centage, he did not make the best bargain he could. The fact is, that Miss Philpot, perceiving how the bait had been swallowed, satisfied honest Mr Vamp, in a whisper, that the plan of operations was changed, by which he should be no loser. She saw in an instant that the avidity of the imprudent antiquarian might be turned to a much better account than selling an old smelting-pot for a Vespasian vase, and laid her plans accordingly. A negotiation was set on foot, in which the services of Dr Wintletrap were engaged as plenipotentiary, with full powers to act for his friend Griffith, who, scorning to shackle him, gave a *carte blanche*, to be filled up at the discretion of his ambassador. It would be tedious to detail all the arts practised on the part of each of the high contracting parties, especially as the reader, being a little in the secret, is already aware that the learned doctor had the game in his own hand, and played it so as to secure the stakes in his family.—Mr Owen and the lady amateur were at length brought together;—The latter persevered in her part to admiration; she was playful—she was learned—she was an antiquarian—a mineralogist

—a chemist—a singer—a dancer, in succession—invariably good-humoured—and yielding upon all occasions, save and except alone on the important article of the Vespasian utensil. Here was her palladium—and had the soul of Sinon himself animated the body of our friend Griffith, she would have baffled him at his own weapons. At the end of three weeks, Griffith found himself upon the terms of old friendship with Amarantha. He scarcely ever left her side. He was at her breakfast-table—loured away the greater part of the morning with her—dined with her at his friend the doctor's—escorted her home at night—and dreamed of her and her vase, till they became inseparable in his imagination, and at length identified. He could not live without the vase—his reputation as a collector was at stake—his zeal as an antiquarian amounted to torture. For some weeks longer he courted the sacred utensil, personified under the fair but rather antiquated form of Miss Philpot. He would have preferred the relique to the lady, had they been capable of separation; but, failing in this, the only expedient left was to marry both. Having arrived at this safe and satisfactory conclusion, he lost no time in throwing himself at her feet. The lady affected a proper degree of surprise, in which she admirably performed her part, having been prepared for it by at least a fortnight's rehearsal, and, as ladies always do upon such occasions, threw her lovely eyes upon "the ground!" I beg to follow the phrase of all preceding historians, without being able exactly to convey to the reader what I mean. When a lover throws himself at his fair one's feet, I conclude it is necessary she should throw something there likewise; and therefore, her chief weapon being her eyes, the phrase might be intended to show that she is willing to lay down her arms, by throwing them on the ground. But this appears to be too figurative for an expression which occurs in every-day transactions; and as I am not aware of any process by which eyes can be thrown down or taken up again, without carrying the body corporate with them, I conclude it is a delicate mode of implying, that when the gentleman throws himself at her feet, the lady performs the same evolution; although I cannot but suspect that more accidents would occur, if this were the case, than love-making in general produces. Whatever difficulty presents itself in this enquiry, I must, however, leave the ingenious reader to solve; all I mean to express, and which I wished to do in the best and most accepted forms of language, is, that Miss Amarantha Philpot looked as modest and bewitching as she could; and having by degrees allowed the first confusion of so *unexpected* a declaration to wear off, melted and softened in proportion as the lover became ardent and pressing, and was, although covered with

blushes, compelled to yield to the irresistible assurance that Griffith Owen could not exist beyond Thursday (this being Saturday) in the ensuing week, without calling her—his own. It has been insinuated that, in the close of the above sentence, the lover paused after the pronoun personal, and, mentally applying it possessively, concluded by throwing his eyes at or into the vase, which stood conveniently upon a pier table, in a direct line with the lady. As Griffith had no time to enter into confessions before his marriage, and was not likely to do so, for his own sake, after it, we have no means of ascertaining the fact, which I believe rests upon no better foundation than the possibility that such might have been the case—a ground, however, upon which, it must be admitted, many a more exalted character has been aspersed, and will continue to be sacrificed, as long as men make their own malevolent dispositions the criterion of judging and arraigning the motives of better men than themselves.

I have not the newspaper at hand—and though I consider dates of great importance in historical reading, I trust, upon the present occasion, the reader will be satisfied with my assurance, that, on the very Thursday above mentioned, Mr Griffith Owen led to the altar “the accomplished Miss Amarantha Philpot, a near connexion of the learned Withering Wintletrap, LL.D. and A.S.S. of this city,” as it stands recorded upon the file of Farley’s Journal at the Bush, even unto this hour.

Accompanied by the vase, the bridegroom stepped into the carriage, and was actually directing the post-boys to drive on, when Dr Wintletrap, with a silver favour, as large and as white as his favourite nautilus, in his little three-cornered hat, called out, “My stars, Mr Owen, you have forgotten the bride!”—and forthwith wedged in the blooming Amarantha, with some difficulty, owing to her seat being previously occupied by her better half. But this little *contre-temps* was overlooked in the festivities of the day—and never was a ceremony concluded with more satisfaction to all parties. This effect was produced, indeed, through means not altogether according to the statutes of Cupid, and unattended by any of those flutterings which the torch of Hymen is said to occasion on its near approximation to its tributaries; but this is all trash, and, I verily believe, no more than a mere heathenish fiction. The nonsense of romance was not likely to lead such honest people astray; and those disappointments which the more sensitive part of mankind experience from any misconceived or unlooked-for disposition or turn of mind in those to whom they are inevitably tied for life, were altogether unknown, either to the antiquarian bridegroom or his antique bride—I mean the lady, not the vase. The bride was,

by her own account, in her thirtieth year; and the register of her birth not being at hand, the fact was not to be controverted by those unmarried ladies, her neighbours, who avowed their conviction of her being, at least for the last ten years, of precisely the same age.

CHAPTER VI.

For some time no pledge of their mutual happiness presented itself to the imagination, and I am inclined to believe, as has been reported, to the wishes of this happy pair.—To use the plainer language of history, no heir appeared to prolong the line of the Owens—nor was it ever thought of even by those most concerned on the occasion. In the mean time, the strict habits of economy in which Mrs Amarantha Owen had been bred up, under the arrangements of her worthy protector Dr Wintletrap, enabled her to reform the household of her husband—and to protract the hour of absolute ruin, which seemed to threaten it, when she entered upon her office. She found, indeed, all her efforts necessary, whilst the unabated zeal of Griffith for the cause of general science continued to eat up, at one end of the account, all that could be saved at the other.

Would it had fallen to my lot to conclude my history in this place: and then, like those who have gone before me, I might be fairly entitled to that delicious ante-colophon of all veritable histories, that Mr Griffith Owen and Amarantha his wife, were happy ever after, and lived to a good old age. This, however, is denied to me, and being doomed to descend a generation lower, I am compelled to say, that so far from living happy ever after, these good people at the end of fifteen months began to feel that all was not as it should be; the gentleman had grown tired of the Vespasian vase, or in his cooler moments suspected some parts of its private history—and the lady, though really a *bas bleu*, and conversant with the names of all the leading sciences, as treated in the Athenæum of Griffith, found the united concern of superintending fossils and butchers' bills, stuffed birds, larded turkeys, pastry, and the pantologies, more than equivalent to the surrender of her liberty, and the enjoyment of comparative independence. Creditors became clamorous, and mortgagees (*odium mortale*, fated enemies to the Owens) importunate. In short, without taking upon us to assign the cognomen which

the boors of Cwm Owen might have attached to Griffith, had such things still remained in vogue, he followed the steps of his renowned ancestors, like a true and legitimate descendant from the Owen stock. He might have been called, Owen the thoughtless—Owen the universalist—or Owen the bankrupt; for in less than ten years from the death of his worthy father, and three after his marriage with the accomplished Amarantha, he broke up the foundation on which Geoffrey Owen had proposed to re-edify the dynasty of the Owens, without the least prospect, (except in speculation,) of ever realizing another. In a few words, the whole property was brought to the hammer, and the purchaser received as a bonus (which he afterwards transferred as a bargain to a vender of curiosities in Whitechapel,) “the whole of that fine collection,” as described in the journals of the day, “which the taste and indefatigable exertions of Mr Griffith Owen had brought together at Weston House,” &c. &c. With a few thousand pounds, and a rent-charge upon his late property of about two hundred pounds per annum, the happy pair retired to lodgings in the College Green, at Bristol, where their pursuits, if on a less extended scale, were by no means of a less speculative nature, than in their previous prosperity. Like other great men, Griffith did not fall alone. The leeches of science, as they dropped off from the only subject on whom they were permitted to fatten, subsisted no longer than the remnant they had been able to retain lasted, and one of the fullest and last to drop was Dr Wintletrap, the uncle of Mrs Amarantha Owen.

Having embarked his all in the concluding speculation of his patron, which was of a more promising nature than usual, he might, if it had succeeded, have enriched himself, but certainly not have saved his friend. Mrs Owen was too sensitively affected to behold the sufferings of her beloved uncle, and he died in prison, at the very moment he had touched upon the discovery of the *Elixir vitæ*, which he entertained no doubt would have satisfied all his creditors, had he lived but to compose it.

Griffith, with a perfect confidence in his own natural powers, determined now to turn them to their fullest account; to restore the equilibrium of his fortunes, which appeared indeed to have lost their balance for ever, and to reinstate himself in power and affluence beyond all former precedent. It may be asked by those, who feel themselves in a similar predicament, how he set to work, for the purpose of achieving this mighty revolution. But, as it is my duty to speak the truth, I in my conscience am bound to express my conviction that he had no fixed plan—not even a resting place from which to start, for many days after he had arrived at the above, to him, satisfactory and conclusive determination. Subsequently, indeed, he embarked in a variety of

concerns, such as the manufacture of paper from soldiers' watch coats—of sugar from parsnips—of Brussels lace from whale-bone—besides many bye arrangements with continental projectors; none of which, as far as I have been able to ascertain, added in any considerable degree to the funds of Griffith Owen. But I do not pledge myself to the fact, as he still, up to the period of the commencement of my labours, occupied the identical apartments in College Green to which he had removed on his first reverse of fortune.

There had, indeed, been an offer made to him by his brother Caleb (with whom he had kept up little intercourse during his high philosophical career) but it was of a nature at which all his feelings revolted, and which ran counter to every preconceived notion of the philosopher. It was simply that he should embark the remnant of his fortune in the iron works, in which he, Caleb, was ready to make an advantageous opening for him. He admitted, however, the kindness of the intention, and made every acknowledgment to his brother which the occasion demanded. At the same time he enlarged upon the prospects which opened before him, and prognosticated the speedy return of more splendid days, when he should be ready and able to assist his brother, should he ever have occasion for his services.

At this period an event happened, for which none of the parties concerned appeared to be in the least prepared, and which, strange to say, our philosopher had not even speculated upon. This was nothing less than a declaration on the part of Mrs Amarantha Owen, that she was in that state in which "ladies wish to be who love their lords," and in which, it is supposed, they cannot be without them. Whether she wished it from the love she bore to her lord and master, is no business of ours to inquire. The said lord expressed little more than his astonishment at first—till having reflected for some days upon the new situation in which the birth of a child would place him, the subject became, like every thing else which found its way to his imagination, a matter of profound speculation. His door was shut even against projectors; and Amarantha, who had been for a long period left to her own resources for amusement, was now never suffered to be absent from his sight. Buchan lay on his right hand—the Pædotrophia on his left—Chesselden and Bell were consulted on conformation, and he was master of Underwood before the quickening of the infant embryo. He possessed himself of every prognostic which the history of medicine or the history of the world afforded—and as he had been tempted to pickle his worthy father as a test of one discovery, so did he seriously ruminate upon the Cæsarian operation (whilst he smiled upon his purposed victim during its suggestion) as an

experiment so successfully originating in the production of a HERO.

The good lady, however, who prudently thought of herself as well as of her child, declined all artificial interference—and had not Griffith reflected also upon the danger in time, he might have been hanged for a murder, whilst he was simply speculating upon an heir.

Suffice it to say, all things proceeded in due order, and the birth of a son was announced to Mr Griffith Owen just as his brother Caleb had called to make his friendly inquiries after his sister-in-law. Griffith had rushed into the chamber of his wife, without reflecting or caring about the consequences, and having been duly turned out by the female attendants, after a single peep at his heir, he insisted that he alone should set off to procure the attendance of the nurse, whom (as has been before noticed) he had at no small pains and cost brought from Crickhowell to Bristol.

He ran to his laboratory for her address, and having by some extraordinary accident found it where he expected, was searching for his hat, when perceiving his brother Caleb coolly perusing "A Treatise on the Miliary Fever," as if he understood it, he rushed into his arms, and gave vent to the joy he experienced on the fulfilment of his speculations.

"I said it would be a boy—and all—every thing depended upon it."

"I sincerely wish you joy, brother," said the kind-hearted Caleb; "but you talk as if a man-child had never been born into the world before."

"Not such a child—under such circumstances—such prognostics—all, all of which are confirmed by its being a boy—a boy"—

This rhapsody was interrupted by Caleb, who really began to suspect that the intellects of the philosopher were somewhat disposed to wander—and having prevailed upon him to sit down, the conversation commenced, to which we have been witness at the commencement of our history, and which, having continued for the greater part of an hour, would probably have terminated in a bloody encounter, but for the sudden apparition of the enraged midwife, who, like some mighty enchanter's dragon, mounted at the tail of a canto in romance (partaking in truth more of the dragon than the enchantress,) parted the combatants, and sent each severally on their way in search of new adventures.

CHAPTER VII.

HAVING thus humbly followed the example of Goldsmith's dramatic hero, whose practical wit carried his lady mother a long journey round about, and at last set her fairly down on the very spot from which she started, I shall proceed to the regular series of events which marked the progress of that illustrious child, whom we have ventured to name Pen Owen—even before the regular ceremony of his baptism; but as this is an instance of our skill in foreseeing what is to happen, ere time is permitted to unfold it, so shall I proceed to verify my anticipation, by showing, as a plain matter of fact, how and wherefore this name was bestowed upon the offspring of Mr Griffith and Mrs Amarantha Owen.

There is a time appointed for all things, and that which is esteemed most proper and orderly was the precise period fixed upon by Mrs Owen for the baptism of her infant. Had it been left to Griffith, there is no saying what might have been the arrangements, or rather derangements, connected with the ceremony. This, however, was deemed by the female council above stairs strictly within the department of the lady; and as there was no particular speculation about the time which could affect any of the thousand and one plans revolving in succession round the ventricles of the philosopher's brain, no interference with this high authority was attempted.

The weightier matter, however, of a name, was considered and reconsidered with Shandean scrupulousness. The family tree was referred to; and the euphonic changes rung upon every family appellation, from Ham to Geoffrey Owen, without any decision being pronounced previous to the eve of the ceremony.

Caleb was thought worthy of being called into consultation upon this weighty matter, as he still possessed, in spite of the rust of trade and his simplicity of character, sufficient family pride to think a name of some importance to the heir of all the Owens.

Pendragon would not be understood; Owen was too short, but had its advantages, from its mystical allusion to the original head of the family already alluded to.

"Owen ap Owen *quasi* Owen ap Noah would do; but it doesn't run off well," observed Griffith. "These modern levelers, too, have so confounded our patronymic distinctions, that they hardly know the difference between ap Rice and ap-pothecary."

"You must make haste and fix upon one," observed Caleb,

rubbing his hands, "for you know the boy is to be christened to-morrow."

"Some name or names he must have, most assuredly—but what?"

"As I am to be his godfather, brother, suppose he were to take my name," said Caleb, looking complacently in his brother's face.

"What!—Caleb?"

"Why not?"

"Was there ever such a name in the family before the contamination of its blood with those Presbyterians the Gwynns?"

"It was our grandfather's by the mother's side, Griffith," observed Caleb.

"Psha! What of that? What right had his family to be sectaries, merely to stigmatize the Owens with a string of puritanical nicknames?"

"After all," observed Caleb, "if the boy is to be the great man you talk of, one name is as good as another, provided it be a Christian's name, and in the line of our family."

"Who ever heard of a great man with such a name? I'd as soon christen him Praise God Barebones, as either Caleb or Griffith. My own name has stood in my way through life."

"Pooh, Griffith! something else has stood in your way; my word has not the less weight among men because Caleb is tacked to it."

"Among men on 'Change—probably not—so much the worse—so much the worse; but let me see, (turning over the leaves of a large folio before him,) Glendower—'twould sound obsolete, and look like a second edition—second editions never do in families—Hugh!—too short—creates familiarity—never could bear a short name—Ilu Gadarn might do!"

"Why, brother, you may as well christen him after the giant Idris!"

"And why not? *He* was a younger branch of the family! Now I think of it, Idris Owen would do well enough—only that the plaguy women would find out some untoward abbreviation. No—let me see—let me see—Dyvnwul Moelmud!"

"Odds heart! brother—they'd never learn to call him by his right name."

"But they couldn't abbreviate it, Caleb; that's one advantage we certainly—however majestic the language, have rather a paucity of vowels."

"I foresee we shall have no ceremony—the child will be without a name," sighed Caleb.

"Without a name! profanation, brother Caleb—his name shall be known to the utter extremities of the earth."

"Pish! Griffith—then let him take one ready-made to his hands, Adam—or Abel."

"The first man of the vulgar era!—no bad hit, Caleb—and yet—no, no—Adam Owen—there shall be something before Adam."

"Before Adam!"

"Ay—ap Adam—would euphonize—Iris ap Adam—ap"——

"Ap *who*?" exclaimed Caleb.

"Psha, brother, you've put me out again—give me the folio—Pen—Pen"——

"Dragon?"

"I have rejected that already."

"Pendennis?"

"No."

"Penruddock?"

"Ruddock—Ruddock—no."

"Pendarves?"

"Pendarves! you've hit it—you've hit it, brother—you've fixed me.—Pendarves was the genius of the family—the friend and companion of Iolo Doch, the favourite bard of Glendower—Pendarves—Pendarves against the field—how the deuce did you stumble upon it before me?"

"I saw it in gold letters upon that green ground, and it struck me."

"Struck you—why didn't it strike me?"

"Because I went straight forward, brother, whilst you were looking about you."

"Psha—nonsense—Pendarves, Titain Tâd Awen or Owen—ay, here it is; which being translated, is in Saxon, *The father of inspiration and genius*."

"For God's sake, have done, brother—you have found a name, and rest satisfied."

"Shall we prefix Titain Tâd?"

"Why, the boy would be worried through the world, like a dog with a canister at his tail."

"Ay, these are levelling times, Caleb! the most sacred things are sacrificed to a jest—Pendarves—Pendarves—the euphony"——

"The what! brother?"

"It sounds smoothly."

"Why, then, let it alone, Griffith—Pendarves be it."

"Pendarves!—yes, it must be so; that is one name at least fixed—fixed as fate—Pendarves Owen of Cwm Owen—ay, ay—fixed. I defy the nursery jades to vulgarize this"——

This knotty point having been at length adjusted, the cere-

mony took place at the appointed time; and the young Christian was safely bestowed in his cradle many hours before the festive party, invited to celebrate the ceremony, broke up.

In the morning, Griffith awoke with the child's name in his mouth—Pendarves Owen—Pendarves Owen—and again congratulated himself upon the softness of the cadence, which, considering the mass from which it had been extracted, was really a matter of some exultation; but we may easily judge of his horror and astonishment when, at the breakfast table, having expressed a wish to see his new-named darling, his far-fetched and long-sought nurse bolted into the room empty handed, or rather empty armed, and, in a coarse provincial dialect, announced that "Master Pan was in a sound sleep."

"Pan!—devil!" exclaimed Griffith, who, in an instant, saw all his theory vanish into smoke—"Go, woman, go."

"Woman, indeed, quotha!" retorted the nurse, slamming the door after her, but not before Griffith had caught a repetition of the fatal words, "that little Pan might go to the devil, if his Pa wished it."

"Madam, madam!" said he, turning to his lady, who had just made her appearance at the breakfast-table, "what is the meaning of this? Have I not given my strict orders that no liberties shall be taken with my child's name?"

"La, Mr Owen, how is it possible for me to keep a padlock on the servants' mouths?"

"How?—by seconding my commands, that the child shall only be called by his right name—Pendarves, madam—Pendarves."

"Why, my dear Griff"—

"Griffith, madam—Griffith; my name's not Griff."

"What of that, my dear Griffith, then?—the child might be suffocating, before his nurse could get out half his name; and then"—

"And what then? I would rather the child should die than his fortunes be marred by a"—

"His fortunes marred, my dear Griffey—Griffith, I mean—what, in the name of common sense, has a misnomer to do with"—

"Do!—every thing, or rather undo every thing. I would rather see him in his shroud than hear him called Pan."

"A strong alternative, my dear spouse; but he shan't be called Pan."

"Pan!—Pan! it's enough to drive a man mad. There's no saying, Mrs Owen, what they may call him next—Pan—Pot."

"Pot Owen!"

"It's no laughing matter, madam, let me tell you, to have one's heir degraded into any vulgar utensil."

"A Vespasian vase, for example."

"Psha, madam!—why bring all my sins and misfortunes in one view before me?"

"Nay, my kind, affectionate Griffey"—

"Griffey again!—zounds!"

"It shan't be Griffey, then, my dearest Griffith; but recollect, if there had been no Vespasian vase, where had been this genius!"

"Madam! I am not in a humour to be trifled with."

"So it appears, my good, kind spouse: you look terribly bilious—a little calomel, methinks"—

"A little devil, madam!—I'll take measures to"—

"You had better take the physic, dear!"

"Damme, madam, if I bear this any longer. I *will* be master in my own house."

"So you shall, my dear Griffey; but do not set about it in anger: the dear child shall be called what you please, and you shall never be Griffeyed again."

"No, nor Jerried either, madam."

"So it should seem—but let the storm pass; and when the sun shines again, we will talk the matter over, kind Mr Griffith Owen."

And so ended this matrimonial sparring scene, as such scenes most usually do. The battle appeared to be a drawn one; but as often as war was proclaimed, (and this was by no means the first waged between the parties in question) the lady, by an admirable coolness, which was never affected by any overweening attachment to her spouse, constantly gained an accession of power: for, although Griffith cannot be accused of entertaining an overweening affection for his lady, his passions, which were warm, constantly hurried him into excesses, of which his more prudent consort invariably availed herself.

In short, after a certain period in the history of their wedded life, the gentleman, when he had cooled, on the close of an action, was induced to prolong the peace, by admitting his error; and the terms to which he was compelled, year after year, to submit, as the price of his ease, left him little power in his household, beyond that of being able to make a declaration of it, in an ebullition of wrath.

Now, for the information of wives in general, it is necessary to explain, that this submission was not sincere, and that, although he observed the terms thus tacitly stipulated, until such times as the patience of Job could afford him no sufficient example, the surrender of his rights was not the result of conviction, but of necessity. He found that, if he wished for peace, he must,

like all minor states, pay a price for it; and, as he saw as little of his good lady as was consistent with the forms of living together, he was generally met with smiles, (unless some infraction of the treaty could be charged upon him,) or with that easy *nonchalance* which we have just witnessed, should he take upon him to assume the authority *de jure*, which he had long ago renounced *de facto*. In either case, matters went on precisely as they had done before; just like a river, that encountering some rude rubbish, or obtrusive fragment, is splashed and dashed about from side to side, with a mighty uproar, but in the next minute resumes its current, and flows on in a calm uninterrupted course.

The scene just described, or similar ones, occurred indeed; but the child continued to be called Pan by the nurse, until a compromise, and that, by manifold concessions on the part of poor Griffith, was effected, by assuring the nurse that Pan was a heathenish name, and ought not to be applied to a Christian child. This had some weight with the good woman; and the abbreviated appellation "Pen," appearing to be thus licensed by a side wind, the whole Owen household, with Mrs Amarantha at their head, availed themselves of the privilege which had been especially barred by the precautionary arrangements of poor Griffith. The world, as if in league with fortune, (who had overturned so many of this unfortunate gentleman's speculations) has never known our hero, nor is likely to know him, as any other than PEN OWEN.

All things must have an end; and the reign of Mrs Amarantha Owen, though despotic, was not of long duration. She died a few years after having given birth to her son, and left her husband sole master of his actions, and of the future destinies of our hero.

CHAPTER VIII.

WERE I to enter into a detailed account of the education of our hero, under such auspices, I should have to begin with a catalogue of authors, many of whom the reader probably has never heard of, and at least half as many he would never wish to hear of again; for there is not a treatise on education, from the first elements to the finished courtier of Chesterfield, which Griffith Owen had not consulted for materials to employ upon the living subject committed to his charge.

As reading occupies time, and, when it is of an interesting description, gallops away with it, this new employment of the philosopher fortunately admitted of the child being left a little to the ordinary means which nature furnishes for the well-being of her creatures.

For some years Griffith as much lost sight of the boy as if he had existed only in one of his own speculations. He had him in his mind's eye, and saw him displaying those powers which his schemes and systems, no doubt, would furnish when they came to be applied. But, in point of fact, little Pen spent by far the greater portion of the first ten years of his life at a house which his uncle Caleb had purchased a few miles out of town. There he had an opportunity of running wild, and gaining health by the most active exercise, which his father's system, had he been ready prepared with it, would probably have marred.

Nor was his mind altogether neglected: a worthy clergyman who lived in the neighbourhood was commissioned by his uncle to devote several hours in the day to him, to instruct him in the elements of the Latin tongue, and to do a much better thing, by laying a foundation for Christian knowledge, which would have formed no part of the philosophical apparatus of his father.

As if in despite of Griffith's prognostics, the lad exhibited no marks of precocious talent, although he was deficient in none of those qualities which, being duly cultivated, render a man respectable in society. His father, it must be confessed, had made an experiment upon his talents at a very early period, by forcing him to learn by rote part of a Latin oration before he could read; and after a course of severe discipline and training for some weeks, during which the child lost both sleep and appetite, he was exhibited to a select corps of kindred spirits. The attempt, as might have been expected by men of more ordinary intellect, proved abortive. The poor victim, when a few stray words had made their escape, was amply applauded, as in duty bound (after a good dinner) by the audience; but being unable to proceed, the failure was charitably attributed by them to the excessive sensibility of the child—whilst one of the company, more inclined to express his satisfaction than his neighbours, transferred a portion of the praise to the father, by extolling his patriotism in making his infant lisp Welsh before he could speak English!

It will not be supposed that a man of so versatile a turn of mind as our friend Griffith, could steadily for so many years devote himself exclusively to one pursuit, without turning occasionally out of his course to follow other phantoms. On the contrary, his rage for projecting new schemes, and embarking in new speculations, occupied no inconsiderable portion of his

time, even during the period of which we are treating ; and we may easily account for his never coming to any final determination upon the most interesting of his pursuits, when we learn that scarcely had he taken up the thread of any given subject, and disentangled it from the heap, when another, if it presented itself in a more attractive form, would carry him off at a tangent, to the utter annihilation of perhaps a week's or even six weeks' labour.

I remember, upon one occasion, he had shut himself up for several days in collating notices from the works of Locke, Fénelon, and Rousseau, and was congratulating himself upon having discovered a mode of reconciling the better parts of their several systems into one compendious code of his own, when a speculation for supplying the London markets with Finnan haddocks and Loch Fyne herrings, proposed by a bankrupt haberdasher of Glasgow, carried him off to the north, and detained him there five months.

This detention, however, was not occasioned by the details of the scheme, towards which he had subscribed, indeed, a good moiety of his annual income, in order to pay the expenses of the projector ; for, on his arrival in Scotland, he found himself relieved from all further anxiety on this head, by the sudden departure of his coadjutor for the coast of Holland with a Dutch skipper.

This misfortune was expelled from his mind by a sudden rage for botanizing, which he had contracted in a chance rencontre with an eminent professor at Glasgow. In less than four-and-twenty hours he had projected a work that was to hand his name down to posterity as a second Linnæus—had arranged his title—adopted an improved nomenclature—written down the heads of several chapters, and a complete series of subjects for a volume of plates. He traversed many of the most picturesque and romantic parts of the country ; and his collections already occupied a considerable space in his travelling equipage, which was not upon the most enlarged scale.

Wandering one morning in the wild region of the Trosachs, he stumbled upon some rare specimens of the mineral kingdom, which giving a new turn to his pursuit, he returned in due time to Edinburgh, after a pedestrian journey of many hundred miles, loaded like a pedlar starting on a six months' campaign.

Here he took up his quarters, and began to arrange his materials for the projected work, which was now to be entitled "Botanical and Mineralogical Researches in the Northern and Western Parts of Scotland." He was indefatigable in his new vocation for several weeks, during which period his friends and family were left in doubt of his very existence.

With the exception of a scheme for manufacturing knee-buckles by steam, for the supply of the western Highlands, (which, fortunately, during the first process, an accidental conversation with a shrewd native of Argyleshire nipped in the bud,) our friend Griffith pursued his object with uninterrupted attention and indefatigability. He had never been so steady to any one given point for the same length of time; but in this instance, his singular perseverance was inauspicious, and attended with an inconvenience he had not foreseen.

Having, imperceptibly to him, contracted debts for board and lodging, and other articles, as philosophers, although they think little about the matter, must obey the common calls of nature, and being utterly unable to discharge them, he was put under restraint, until a remittance from his brother at Bristol came to his relief; granted, however, on condition that he would immediately leave Scotland and return home. To avoid a recurrence of the evil, he was therefore obliged to return, *re infectâ*, to his old quarters in the delightful city of Bristol.

I must not omit to mention, that he lost his work and his port-manteau together at York, while disputing with a mechanical genius upon the construction of the patent wheel of the mail-coach in which he travelled; so that, although Mr Constable and Mr Murray had received notices to announce the work in the Edinburgh and Quarterly, they are not likely to profit by his most profitable excursion.

It is clear, therefore, that although he never wholly lost sight of his intended system for young Pendarves' education, it was occasionally suspended, and during considerable intervals, in the course of those years, which were ripening the faculties of the youth, without any regular education, or what he would call education at all.

Mr Caleb Owen's villa, which was situated within a few miles of Bristol, between that city and Gloucester, commanded a fine view of the Severn, and was not rendered unpleasant to the eyes of that gentleman, by the addition of the hills of Glamorgan, which form a noble back-ground to it. He usually spent the Saturday, Sunday, and part of Monday at this place, to inhale the pure air, after the fatigues of his weekly application in the accompting house.

His principal neighbours were, as usual, the squire and the parson, both of whom were truly respectable in their way: the former commanding respect from the extent of his possessions, the other ensuring it by the excellence of his character: which of the two was the happiest man must be left to the judgment of the reader, when he becomes better acquainted with the parties.

Sir Luke Oldsworth was of an ancient family, and, unlike

many of his rank, possessed the large property of his ancestors undiminished for many generations. He was proud of his family, and was therefore never guilty of any act which could reflect upon what *he* considered the honour of it. He behaved liberally to those tenants who did not offend him, and was generous even to those who were ready to bow implicitly to his decisions. He was a staunch whig in his political principles, the sincerity of which might perhaps have been called in question, by a nice and fastidious observer of the mode in which the government of the manor house was conducted ; but there is nothing so unnatural or inconsistent in this as some people may suppose.

The baronet was, however, in a situation which awakened all the kindlier feelings of Caleb Owen, when he first settled in the neighbourhood, for he was watching over the deathbed of a son whom he adored, and of whose recovery he had not the slightest hope :—there was nothing to mitigate the severity of the impending blow. This son had been married, but was left a widower at thirty, without children, and the noble property of the Oldysworths was likely to pass into the hands of strangers. His lady was the daughter of a nobleman of high rank, and this had been her chief recommendation to his father, Sir Luke ; not that she was unamiable, or without those qualities which might have endeared her to one capable of drawing them out, and giving them their due play and influence. This, however, was not the case with Mr Oldysworth ; he had been a spoiled child, and the only being within range of Sir Luke's imperious control, who had never been sacrificed to it—an exception the more unfortunate, as it requires little knowledge of mankind to be assured that the heir of such a property is never likely to meet with much control in any other quarter. Lady Harriet had been equally a mother's darling at home, and these two *enfants gâtés*, contracted in the nursery, and wedded before years of discretion, had neither the power nor inclination to contribute to each other's happiness.

The sports of the field, and the convivial society of sportsmen, occupied the larger portion of his time, whilst the wife, neglected and thrown upon her own resources, which were, alas, but scanty, felt that she had been made a sacrifice to family arrangements, and literally pined herself in the course of a few years into such a state of nervous irritation, that a slight cold, taken at an open window, brought on a fever, which terminated her life before she had reached her twenty-fifth birthday.

Her husband neither felt, nor affected to feel, her loss very severely ; but having attended, under the guidance of Sir Luke, to the punctual and decorous fulfilment of the period allotted by fashion for the recovery of the mind from every species and

degree of grief, he resumed his former pursuits, just as if such a being (especially having left no living memorial behind her) had never been.

In the meanwhile Sir Luke was actively employed in finding out and selecting a new victim for the produce of heirs to the Oldysworth estate, and was weighing the several merits of a duke's grand-daughter, and the sole heiress of a brother baronet; and when he had just approached a decision, his son was brought home lifeless on a litter, in consequence of his horse falling with him at a desperate leap. The unfortunate young man lingered for some months; but the impetuosity of his disposition, and his disregard of advice, at length terminated a useless life, and blasted the hopes of an ambitious father for ever.

These are common occurrences—we meet with them every day; and yet, although neither the father nor the son appear to be objects of especial commiseration, when we compare them with the multitudes of suffering beings whose misfortunes are not the purchase of their own folly; we must not blame our friend Caleb for feeling, ay, and feeling deeply, for the desolate old man, weeping over the deathbed of his son! No—hard must be the heart that could look on such a scene unmoved—Caleb was a Christian, and a practical one. He knew that the corroding conscience of the childless being before him, rendered him an object truly pitiable. He felt that many a virtuous sufferer, under similar privations, would have found support, whilst he, alas, knew not where to seek it. He afforded it; and to him was this hopeless and sorrowing father indebted for more than life—for serenity and submission to the will of Providence.

Caleb had been apprized of the real state of affairs at Oldysleigh Grange, previous to his acquaintance with the family; and it was this knowledge that induced him to take so active a part in what was now going forward.

Sir Luke had once two sons; but the same degree of forbearance which marked his conduct towards the elder, was not extended to George, his younger son. That strange caprice which we observe in many, otherwise respectable, fathers, and mothers too, was peculiarly evinced in the strong and hard-lined character of Sir Luke. It is not for us to find motives for every action, or series of actions, which influence that inconsistent being, man. The fact is, that this younger boy, George, was not only thrown into the background, by the system of favouritism observed towards his brother, but was pursued, in the very spirit of persecution, for every error or venial fault which could possibly be laid to his charge. His education was neglected, and in return, he was reprobated as a blockhead. He was scarcely ever admitted to the presence of his parent—(his

mother had died when the boys were young)—and yet was stigmatized for his predilection for low company.

Under these circumstances, finding, in the humble establishment of a neighbouring gentleman, of good birth, but small income, a constantly warm and cordial welcome, he flew to his friend Annesley, whenever he could escape from the thralldom of home.

Lucy Annesley, a lovely girl of his own age, who had partaken of his childish griefs, and had many a time soothed the afflictions of her playmate, had never marked the period when such attentions and sympathies ought to be replaced by reserve and habits of restraint. She still continued, at seventeen, to share in the more deeply felt insults which were daily accumulated upon the head of her friend, as she had done when he could scarcely lip out his grievances.

Mr Annesley having nothing else to do in the world, was a reading man; and Mrs Annesley was completely devoted to her nursery, from which Lucy had now, for several years, been elevated into a sort of housekeeper.

Both father and mother had been used to see George Oldysworth once a day, at least for many years; and they did not mark his growth, as they would have done had they seen him only at more distant intervals.

It was very natural, therefore, when George declared, at the age of eighteen, he would no longer endure the persecution of home, that Lucy, who was only a year younger, should feel interested in an event which would so completely derange the system become too habitual to admit even of the idea of its being broken up.

The avowal of his fixed determination to abandon his father's roof plainly opened the state of his heart to poor George; and Lucy was not long in ascertaining that her childish sympathies were not to be shaken off by the young woman. The question was debated for several months; and the result may be easily anticipated.

One fine summer morning, Lucy was missed at the breakfast table; and about the same time, the family tutor at Oldysleigh Grange, having discovered that George's bed had not been slept in the preceding night, hurried to Sir Luke's study, to be the first bearer of the happy intelligence, that Master George had been guilty of the enormity of sleeping out of the house.

The truth, however, was not suspected until the enquiries of the Annesleys began to excite the apprehension of the parties concerned. Expresses were sent off in different directions; but returned without having been able to trace the runaways. A week elapsed, and no tidings had reached the distracted Annes-

leys, who, however, were fully implicated in all the guilt of the young people. The baronet swore a mighty oath, that he would be revenged upon those peddling gentry who had encouraged his boy in rebellion, in order to entrap him into a marriage with their daughter, to whom he applied an epithet too strong and indecent to be recorded in these pure pages.

A length a letter arrived from London, written jointly by the young culprits, acknowledging their marriage, professing penitence, (*not* on account of their marriage) and praying for pardon.

Sir Luke, without hesitation, returned an answer, breathing vengeance against his son, and giving him one week to decide whether he would resign the girl, (which he was at liberty to do, as the marriage could not be valid in law,) or be banished for ever from the paternal roof, without a sixpence. The high-spirited boy disdained the base and selfish alternative proposed by his father, and all negotiation was broken off—the baronet calling Heaven to witness, in terms neither necessary, nor very edifying to repeat, that the rebellious changeling should never again darken the doors of Oldysleigh Grange. The oath was too faithfully registered.

A similar appeal from the young exiles was made to the Annesleys, who, from the apprehension of giving colour to the imputations of Sir Luke, in having connived at their elopement, refused either to receive them, or to hold communication with them. They felt that they could, at *any* time, recall the sentence of banishment; and, hoping that the baronet would, at *some* time, relent, conceived the temporary distress the delinquents were likely to suffer, a just retribution for the inconsiderate folly of which they had been guilty.

The mother, however, could not endure the thought of their being utterly destitute, and thrown upon a world which they knew only by report. Enclosing, therefore, a bank bill, she assured them, in as strong and severe a tone as her pitying feelings could assume, that it was the last she would ever send them—judging, poor woman, that it would support them until the day of reconciliation. Little did she think that she spoke a fatal truth, when she meant only an innocent deception. But vain are the anticipations of man—that day never arrived.

A few months afterwards, a friend of the Oldysworth family in London, who had, from the mere impulse of humanity, supplied the young couple with the means of subsistence, wrote to inform Sir Luke, that in proceeding to the Mediterranean, where his son had looked forward to an establishment, the ship which was conveying them had gone to the bottom, and that every soul on board had perished.

The baronet felt some compunction, it is said, upon the receipt

of this intelligence; but having now no other claim upon his affections, he centred all his hopes, and bestowed the little which he perhaps felt due, although never elicited, of what is called paternal love for his second son, upon his eldest, and now only hope.

Sir Luke, in a few years, had as effectually banished his child from his recollection, as he had originally done from his roof; but misfortune is a key which forces open many a hard and hitherto impenetrable conscience. The miserable possessor of lands and heritages, bereft of all that could render them of any value to him by the death of his heir, no sooner felt the forlornness of his state, than a retrospect of his past life burst upon his mind, and awakened recollections, bitter as they were uncontrollable.

The heart of Caleb Owen instinctively suggested the means of consolation to be derived even from this very depth of human affliction; but it would have puzzled him to render his own convictions available to another. His simple sympathy, however, did much; and his friend, Mr Mapletoft, the clergyman of the parish, of whom we have already spoken, and whom he sought as an ally, did the rest. What was past, was irremediable; and sincere repentance was a foundation upon which he hoped to build up a new and better disposition of mind. The baronet was no longer the same inflated being, in whose presence tenants trembled and menials crouched. He was marked as a melancholy man; but the consolations of religion which, like his child, he had formerly rejected in the pride of his heart, prevented him from being a desponding one.

CHAPTER IX.

CALEB OWEN passed much of his time in the company of Sir Luke. He reconciled him to the Annesleys, who had removed to a small estate which had descended to them, in the neighbouring county of Dorsetshire, and had, as we have seen, persuaded him to unbend towards the clergyman of the parish, whom, in his flush of prosperity, he could scarcely be taught to treat other than as a sort of better taught and better clothed menial.

Mr Mapletoft, however, was skilled in human nature, and knew the world by experience. He had been an army chaplain

for several years before he obtained preferment, and had visited most of the courts of Europe as tutor to a young nobleman, to whose patronage he was indebted for the living he now held. But he turned not his knowledge of his fellow man to that account which might accord only with his own calculations of interest. He probed not the weak points of his neighbour to expose, but if possible, to heal them. He was a man who—, in short, he was a man who believed what he preached, and acted so as to satisfy others of the sincerity and efficacy of his faith. Such a one was not capable of resenting any previous ill-will which the baronet might have shown towards him, at a moment when his services were likely to be beneficial to him.

A Bristol divine, named Martin Loup, (one of the church *established there*,) had been for several years tutor in the Oldysworth family, and had by his subserviency, which he sanctified with the title of Christian humility, wormed himself into the good graces of Sir Luke.

This pious divine had proved Mr Mapletoft to be a bad minister, because he had adorned himself in the “filthy rags” of benevolence, and recommended the same clothing to others. He easily satisfied Sir Luke on this head, who considered religion, like law, necessary only to those who lived by professing it; and his household found it a much easier task to acknowledge themselves sinners in general to their ghostly confessor, than to put any restraint upon those vicious propensities, which tempted them to transgress the ordinances of the moral law. The baronet was easily induced to believe that the vicar was a “dumb dog;” because he had used no invective against the squire, although he would not yield to his decision in the case of his own tithes; and was happy to find that by a new interpretation of religious duties, he was not the worse Christian for having on the aforesaid occasion called the parson a dog, with an epithet so very similar in sound to that appropriated by the divine, that a single letter only need be changed to give it a full sound and correspondence.

To this man had the baronet entrusted, for several years, the education of his sons, and his heir had long embraced the opinions of his tutor, happy to find he might compromise with his conscience for the enjoyment of every gratification which presented itself to his appetite, by a systematical adoption of certain tenets as articles of implicit faith (which he never unsettled by too closely investigating) and by occupying a front seat in his director’s chapel, or at a village bible society.

Poor George, the younger boy, had early incurred the hatred of his worthy tutor, by an unlucky turn for mimicry, which had nearly reconverted the household, and undone the labour of many

a tedious harangue of the indefatigable divine. The brothers were alienated by this schism in the family, no less than by the opposition of their characters; and the pedagogue, magnifying every little peccadillo of his younger charge into a crime of magnitude, the father, had he even been drawn towards him by any natural feelings, would have been justified in reprobating him for the reported viciousness of his character.

When the projected flight of George had first taken possession of his mind, he made his elder brother his confidant, under a most solemn pledge of secrecy, and, with the exception of adding Martin Loup to his private council, he most solemnly kept his word.

By the confidential advice of that evangelical divine, George, who was kept short of pocket-money, in order to check his *vicious* propensities, was supplied from the purse of his generous brother, on this occasion, with the means of escaping and carrying off his mistress. The priest, who from a hiding-place had seen the parties fairly off at nine o'clock on the preceding night, took especial care not to discover that his younger charge had not slept at home, till, as we have seen, the baronet had taken his breakfast on the following morning.

Whether this was for the kind purpose of guarding the young pair against the possibility of being overtaken; or from the more pious motive of giving them their full swing of folly, as a *materiel* for future repentance, I do not take upon me to say. The reader, therefore, may decide, as he thinks proper, upon this point of casuistry.

All intrigues, whether in politics or morals, are subject to sudden reverses, and Martin Loup, good easy man, when he had looked to fatten upon the worthy baronet's credulity for many a long year to come, lost his hold, and was shaken from his seat in a single instant.

Either his zeal outstripped his policy, or he relied too implicitly upon the firmness of his own grasp, when he insinuated, *in the most delicate manner possible*, and with a suavity peculiarly his own, that some doubt might be entertained, whether, in *prudence*, a qualification in the number and construction of those aids to polished phraseology, to which, by a slip of the tongue, he applied the broad term of profane swearing, might not be advisable in his patron. He did not mean to denounce this disposition to energetic illustration as an evil work, but as having perhaps a tendency to scandalize the righteous overmuch, in the eyes of those who still clung to the flesh pots of Egypt, and could not shake off the idle notions of the nursery. It was necessary to avoid giving offence to over-tender consciences. "In the same manner," continued the conscientious preacher,

who did not perceive the prognostics of a coming storm in the contemplation of his own eloquence, "in the same manner we claim, as an act of obedience to the ministerial authority on the part of the lower classes, that they should abstain from showing themselves 'given to much drink,' *in public*."

The baronet upon this occasion eyed his confessor with a look of ineffable contempt, and asking him if he was serious, commanded him to leave his house and family that instant, for that d—— him if he didn't prefer the dumb dog, as he called the vicar, with all his sins upon his head, to the impudent, insolent, barking puppy, who took upon himself to dictate to a man of ten thousand a-year, in a ring fence!

Sir Luke was always a man of his word, when pledged by his passions; and thus in a moment terminated a connexion which had subsisted for several years, and he forbade his name ever to be mentioned in his presence.

This event happened several years previous to the date of our history; and it is, I believe, pretty well ascertained that Sir Luke, except an occasional attendance at church for the sake of variety, was never known to show any disposition to ascertain whether the vicar, with his filthy rags, or the tutor, without a rag to his discipline, was the fittest and properest person to show him the way to heaven.

The religious faith of the baronet, therefore, as I think has been sufficiently shown, was not in that condition which admitted of its being made a source of consolation in the hour of suffering and privation. Martin Loup, had he yet been a retainer in the household, would perhaps have laboured to convince him that he had been preordained to evil, and that neither prayers nor penitence could avail him. Mr Mapletoft bade him look up with humble confidence to the God of Mercy—to repent him of his sins, and to reform his life.

He was successful—not, indeed, by a sudden note of conversion—not by dogmatically fixing the precise moment when the sinner was loosed from the hold of Satan—not in watching the operation of the spirit, as if it were the exhibition of a panacea—or in founding an irreversible decree upon a fallible symptom of hysterics, or a qualm of conscience.

He opened the volume of truth, and explained the covenant of peace in the simplicity of Christian truth, and in accordance with those feelings of the soul which were implanted in man for its due reception. He announced the glad tidings to his humbled parishioner, to whom they were almost as new as to the shepherds of Bethlehem—in the words of the angelic revelation—and devoutly urged as a truth, which all the sophisms of metaphysical theology could not alter, that in our duty towards

the Almighty, and love for our neighbour, **THAT GLORY** was fulfilled which was to the Most High, and **THAT PEACE** and **GOOD-WILL** towards the creatures of his hand, illustrated, by the strict performance of our duty, and the benevolent application of the means we possessed to the wants of others. He no more extolled the *merit* of good works than those who deny their necessity; but he insisted that although no work of that fallen and fallible creature man could avail to redeem him from the penalty of transgression, yet that the atonement made for his sins would be equally unavailing if he fulfilled not the conditions imposed by him who made it;—that by his own best works no one can be saved; but that *without them*, no one was entitled by the covenant to hope for salvation.

The effect was as might be hoped from such a mode of proceeding. Sir Luke was a man of the world, full of prejudices, and the pampered child of fortune; but his sufferings under his present heavy dispensation, and the conviction of his bereaved state being the consequence of his own hasty and criminal conduct, showed that his conscience had indeed slept, but was not dead within him. The habitual violence of his temper was now so far subdued, that he did not interrupt his friendly consoler in laying the foundation of his principles in his heart. The conviction which followed the arguments adopted for building up the house of faith within, applying to the reason and not to the passions of the recipient, soon began to exhibit themselves in the chastened and subdued habits of the baronet. Here was no miracle—no subject for “published convictions,” or “testimonies to sudden awakenings.” It was the call for repentance on a sinner who, chastened for the wisest purpose, became humbled in the dust, and, first beholding the beauty of holiness, was steadily supported in his approaches towards it—and finally entered into covenant with it.

CHAPTER X.

JEREMY BENTHAM, that profound and mighty unintelligible reformer, would call the greater part of our last chapter rank “Church of Englandism;” but I would not for the world have my readers suppose that, in these liberal times, I have a particular, or, more popularly speaking, a bigoted attachment to any one peculiar set of principles or opinions.

All men have a right to judge for themselves, whether they have judgment or not; and every man ought, in order to prevent any force upon the conscience, to form his code of morals and religion for himself! Who shall dare touch this sacred principle of a free people and a liberal age? What is freedom, if we are not free to choose evil as well as good—error as well as truth? Where there is no choice there can be no election, and where there is no election there can be no liberty! Q. E. D.

The only liberty I personally claim is to expose pride and hypocrisy, wherever and under whatever form I may happen to discover them. The contempt and bitterness entertained by a professing Christian towards those whom he considers in a state of reprobation, because they are not of his sect, afford the most perfect illustration of the character, handed down to us on sacred testimony, of a PHARISEE; and it is the last that can find a shelter or a sanction under the Christian dispensation. An old quaint writer (one, however, of infinite point and humour) describes a genuine Puritan “as a diseased piece of apocrypha. Bind him to the Bible, and he corrupts the whole text.”

In a word, the most offensive, as well as the most common, garb that pride assumes, is humility! A dissembler baits his craft with it, and is pretty sure of his small fry; his cunning is not visible to the eye, but only to the judgment.

Thus we historians may occasionally betray a leaning towards one side or the other, as the facts to be recorded influence our judgment or operate upon our feelings. But I beg it may be understood, once for all, that it is my wish not to appear to be too consistent in my opinions, from the fear and apprehension of being set down as a bigot; nor too much attached to the rude notions of our forefathers, on politics, morals, social habits, laws, or institutes, lest I should lose my hold upon my readers as a philosopher.

The Rev. Richard Maplettoft, vicar of Oldysleigh, has no particular claim upon our interest but what is purely personal; I mean, I have never heard any thing extraordinary, or what is called interesting, in his early history, beyond his having been a boy born with a very happy disposition of mind—who neither disgraced nor distinguished himself at school—had his emulation excited at college, and evinced that he possessed a certain portion of talents by taking a very honourable degree. Perhaps, indeed, his travels might afford much insight into the private history of the cabinets of Europe; but as I understand he has some intention of giving them to the public in his own way, the reader may be pleased to dispense even with a general outline of his route. Much might also be culled out of his military campaigns; but the public has of late been somewhat gluttoned

with romances of this nature, and I have advised my friend to introduce all that he has to say on this head in an appendix to his travels.

Mr Mapletoft had married the widow of an officer who was killed in the same action with the brave Abercrombie in Egypt. He had no children; but Mrs Mapletoft had adopted a little girl at the request of her former husband, who now supplied the place of a daughter, and was as much beloved by her protectors as if she had been what she actually supposed herself to be, until she arrived at an age to be informed of the truth. Mrs Mapletoft had given the child her own maiden name of Craig, and christened her by that of her early benefactor, Captain Ellice, her former husband.

Ellice Craig was a beautiful child, with a fine animated countenance, lively black eyes, and of a temper which, for want of an expression among earth-born epithets, we generally hear termed heavenly. With this child had our hero, Pen Owen, been brought up, more as one of the family than as a mere pupil, under the roof of Mr Mapletoft; for whilst his father Griffith, was speculating upon an education for him, and his uncle Caleb spending five days out of the seven at Bristol, in order to raise a fortune for him, he was thrown for the greater part of his time, as I have before observed, upon strangers, who soon became his warmest friends, and the most disinterested of benefactors. Ellice Craig was not a sharer in his Latin exercises; but, with this exception, they had all their pursuits and pleasures in common; and if she were desired to step across the green, or to run about for exercise, she would have conceived it a moral, if not a physical impossibility, to do either the one or the other unless little Pen were at hand to accompany her.

Pen Owen had reached his twelfth birthday, and Ellice had passed her tenth, before any interruption to this tender union of interests had occurred; for Griffith was at that advanced period as undetermined in his plans as at the hour of the boy's birth; and Caleb, who thought him well placed under the superintendence of such a preceptor and friend as Mapletoft, never interfered with his brother's speculations, or even laughed, as he was wont to do on other occasions, at the procrastination of his plans.

About this period, however, the two brothers having dined together, had been sitting for some time silent over their wine; the one, as usual, wandering in imagination on the realization of some reigning project, the other very nearly asleep—when a note was abruptly delivered by the servant to Caleb, from Oldysleigh, which, he said, required an immediate answer. adjusting his spectacles to his nose, and opening the note with

that sort of precision which marks a man of business, and one at the same time unused to any other sort of correspondence, he started on a sudden, and roused the attention of his brother, by loudly ejaculating, "What's to be done with the boy?"

"What boy?"

"Why—your boy—Pen!"

"Pendarves?"

"Well—Pendarves—here's Mapletoft's girl is seized with the measles."

"What's that to the boy?"

"Nothing—only he may catch them too."

"I've my doubts," said Griffith, half-closing his eyes, pursing up his mouth, bending his body forward, and leaning his two elbows on the corresponding arms of his chair, "I've my doubts whether, in the long-disputed points of infection and contagion"——

"The deuce take thy doubts, brother Griffith! Here's a fact—the girl is ill, and the boy ought to be removed; but my friend tells me here that Pen"——

"Pendarves!"

"Pen-devil! Heaven forgive me! There's not a moment to be lost; he says the boy cannot be torn from the child, and that he will inevitably catch the infection."

"There, brother—there—patience—the question I say is, whether infection or contagion"——

"Don't contagion me—nonsense!" exclaimed Caleb, rising. "Wilt stop to talk learned rigmarole, which doesn't signify three doits, whilst the life of your child is threatened."

"Who threatened it?" demanded the absent philosopher.

"Who—why! I tell you, Pendarves will catch the measles through his own obstinacy, and I am half mad."

"Pendarves—the measles! Well, and what of that? there's my friend Dr Fidget's specific."

"Dr Bedevil's broomstick! Would you murder your child with your speculations. Here, David, order my horses to the door as fast as they can be brought. I must take measures, since you will not exert your authority."

"Authority!"

"Ay, authority! The boy must be torn from the sick-room if he will not leave it by fair means."

"Fair means! Why the deuce don't they whip him?"

"Whipping won't do with him, I promise you."

"What! Is the dog so hardened?"

"No; but he is of an age to be reasoned into his duty—not whipped"——

"A child reasoned into duty! A baby's rattle, brother, would

do better. Why, what has a child, whose education is not yet begun, to do with reason? Stop till he's educated—then, indeed, *me duce*!”

“Mefiddle! What, dost think him still in swaddling-clothes?”

“Not far from it, good brother. Let me see—what is his age?”

“Age—why—twelve going on thirteen!”

“TWELVE—impossible!”

“True as gospel however, or I can't reckon, Griffith.”

“Pendarves twelve years old!”

“Last thirteenth of November, Griffith.”

“Why, that's three years older than he ought to be; my system was to commence at nine.”

“Then he has gained three years and a fraction, brother.”

“Three years! I'm undone—the whole thread is ravelled! Why, in the name of common sense—your own beloved standard and gauge of all things—why the deuce did you not tell me this before?”

“I could not tell ye before it happened.”

“What!”

“That he was twelve years old.”

“But you could have told me when he was nine; that was precisely the starting point. Nine, says”——

“So I would, hadst thou asked me. But who ever thought, Griffith, of telling a father that his son was nine years old!”

“I'm undone! No aid supplied to his genius.”

“What of that, brother Griffith? It's all in your own way.”

“Psha! He should have been furnished with materials to”——

“That's done, sure enough,” said Caleb.

“Done!—How?”

“By me,” said Caleb.

“You—you furnish materials for teaching the young ideas how to shoot?”

“Ay, ay, that among the rest; he shall bring down his bird with any lad of his years,” chuckled Caleb.

“Psha, brother! One can't make you understand plain English.”

“Ay, but he can—and Latin too. Why, he knows more than I did, when I left Dr Pros”——

“How's this?” exclaimed Griffith with distended eyes.

“How is it? Why, the boy is a good scholar for his years.”

“What!—a scholar?”

“Yes; neighbour Mapletoft has acted as a father by him.”

“And what right—what right, Mr Caleb Owen, had Mr Maple—what's his name—to be father to my son?”

"Right! Why, any man has a right to do what he is asked to do, provided it be just and lawful; and as you neglected the boy"——

"Neglected! Have I for this toiled and sweated by the lamp, night after night, and year after year? Are these" pointing to a shelf which groaned under MSS. of all forms and dimensions—"are these, I ask, proofs of my neglect?"

"Proofs poz, brother. Had you toiled and lamped less, you would have done more; and the true state of the case is, the boy must have been a dunce if it had not been for me."

"A dunce!"——

"Ay, a dunce, if he had not found friends able and willing to do something better than set their wits a wool-gathering among books and lamps, and such like nonsense."

Here he was broken in upon by a strength of expression which, from a delicacy peculiar to myself, I withhold for the sake of my more fastidious readers; as likewise a scene which, before Caleb's horses arrived at the door, had assumed something of the nature of those concussions which the stubbornness of the native rocks of our worthy brethren oppose to the obtrusive waves hurled against them during a sharp southerly gale, where, in fact, little injury in either instance is to be apprehended by the conflicting parties; it is only in the case of an interloper, in the shape of a crazy bark, or a more crazy mediator, that wrecks or broken heads are incurred.

The consequence of this accidental conversation, however, did not, as was generally the case in those which passed between the worthy brothers, end in absolutely confirming each in their opinion of the other's inveterate obstinacy, and in strengthening the sentiments each had previously entertained. Griffith began to reflect upon the age of his son as a plain matter of fact worthy of being taken into immediate consideration; and Caleb, borrowing something of his brother's speculative turn of mind, could not help reflecting that he himself, till called upon in the course of the conversation just related, had forgotten the age of his nephew, or, which is nearly the same thing, had not recollected that habits have more than begun to fix themselves in the mind by the age at which he had arrived.

The tenaciousness of the boy in resisting the efforts of one whom it was his pride in general to obey, and his resolution to share the danger of his little playmate, Ellice Craig, led him to look forward to probable consequences, should the present order of things be suffered to continue. On his approach to the vicarage, however, these speculations, like those of his brother, began to yield to feelings of a stronger nature; and when he was told by the apothecary, on his entering the parlour,

that the boy had shown evident symptoms of having contracted the disorder, he readily assented to the earnest intreaties of Pen, to be permitted to continue in his present quarters.

I could, if I would, in order to fill up the period necessary for the convalescence and perfect recovery of our young friends, enter into the mode of treatment which was followed by such clear evidences of its efficacy; but as I am not aware of the apothecary, though a very excellent man, being either a speculator or a conjurer, the reader may rest satisfied with my well authenticated report, that at the end of about a fortnight the two patients were seen running after one of their playmates, a large Newfoundland spaniel, in apparently as rude health and as boisterous spirits, as if they had never seen the interior of a sick chamber.

It was thus that Caleb beheld them on a Saturday afternoon, after a dusty ride from Bristol. The boy was desired to be at the villa at dinner, which, probably, he would have refused, had he been at liberty, as Ellice Craig was not, as usual, to make one of the party. This was, however, a passing feeling of resentment, which he qualified by an appointment for an evening ramble with her; and by the time he arrived at the villa he was able, with an unclouded countenance, to tender to his dear uncle Caleb those affectionate expressions of pleasure at seeing him, which sprang from the feelings of his heart.

Caleb had matured his speculations during the last ten days, and had come to a resolution, of which, as he was unused to the process, the reader may doubt the policy and prudence, however he may be disposed to justify the observations which led to it. The truth is, and must be told, if the reader has not already discovered it, that Caleb was a warm-hearted good sort of man, but was as ignorant of the nature of metaphysical enquiries, I had almost said, as of the name. Any thing abstract had with him the appearance of mysticism; and when he stood up in manful fight against the aberrations of his brother's mind, he looked only to the results, and concluded that these being constantly unsuccessful, the machinery by which they were manufactured must be crazy and good for nothing. The particular mode of manufacture he knew nothing about; and when he ranged all the blunders of the ill-starred Griffith under the head of speculations, he limited the term to his own business-like construction of it, and the balance of profit and loss decided the question.

It is not very likely, then, without the occurrence of some miraculous light (which he was not likely to encounter, as he set at nought the whole phalanx of the Bristol illuminati,) that he should have fathomed the human mind, or penetrated into the

human character very deeply. He had good sound common sense—he was a devout man, and, I repeat, a good one; he, therefore, could discriminate very accurately all that appeared upon the broad open path of society, and he rarely failed to attribute virtue to any one whom he knew to be habituated to benevolent actions; and constantly called him rogue who, upon clear evidence, was guilty of dishonesty, although that rogue might make, saving his rogueship, the pleasantest companion in the world.

When he perceived, as he thought, the possible future consequence of his nephew's having identified himself with his play-fellow, Ellice Craig, the notion was not suggested by any deep insight into the nature of love, but from the plain matter of fact, of the same thing having occurred in the family of one of his friends, and the certainty, according to every rule of arithmetic, that the same sums, if duly cast up, would always give the same total. So far he might be right; but when he took upon him to originate measures of prevention, he had to rely upon his own judgment, and there I think it possible he may have erred.

When, therefore, after having swallowed two or three glasses of wine, he began to address a boy of little more than twelve years of age, upon the probable consequences of an imprudent connexion in early life, as a motive for removing him from his present situation, he forgot, or, I should rather say, he did not know that he was thrusting notions into the head of the boy, which probably might never have been produced there unless this judicious process had impregnated it with them. Instead of removing him from danger, which might have been done in the natural course of things, as a necessary advance in his education, he took the pains to point out a danger of which his attentive auditor had never dreamed, and which, when made known, convinced the boy—it was rather to be courted than avoided.

"What harm, my dear uncle, can there be in loving my dear Ellice?"

"Harm! my child! why, the greatest possible—you may fall in love with her."

"Fall in love, uncle! I'm quite sure I can never love her better than I do now—and yet I feel no danger."

"But, my dear Pen—it's a different thing altogether—it"——

"Then there is nothing to fear, I have loved my dear Ellice for so many years."

"Pish! boy—the harm's to come—if you fall in love with her, I tell you, then"——

"What then!"

"Don't repeat my words, you little obstinate dog," cried the

vexed Caleb, who was at a loss how to answer his childish interrogator.

"I only asked what then, my dear uncle, Caleb."

"Then—why you may be fool enough to marry her."

"Marry her! sure I can't do that yet, uncle—it's only grown up men that marry—there's time enough for that."

"Time enough—you don't think you're to stand still, d'ye?—you'll be a man by-and-by"——

"And will it do me any harm to marry then, uncle?"

"I—never married."

"Ay—but my father did."

"Your father was a—psha—no matter—you're a child and know nothing about marriage—I tell you it is a bad business."

"Is it, uncle?—why, I'm sure, my dear, dear Papa and Mamma Mapletoft are as happy as the day is long."

"Pish, boy—that's not the thing."

"Why, they are married."

"Yes—they are married, to be sure—but still"——

"Then what's the harm of marrying, if it makes people as happy as the day's long, uncle Caleb?"

"Imprudence in a choice."—Now poor Caleb thought himself safely landed—"Falling in love with an improper object—there, boy."

"That can't happen to me, my dear, good uncle. Elice Craig is the properest and dearest creature in the world."

"Imprudence in a choice," repeated Caleb, still grasping the idea by which he hoped to be saved—"choosing a girl without money!"

"Ah! now, uncle, you are laughing at me, I see—what can money have to do with love?"

"Money—you can do nothing without it, child; it is the mainspring of life—it is—in short, it is every thing—buys every thing"——

"It won't buy love, surely, uncle?"

"Yes, yes, but it will, I tell you—it will buy every thing under the sun."

"I don't want money, then."

"Why—you little troublesome urchin?"

"Because I have got every thing I want without it; and I'm sure I would not sell Elice's love for all the money in the world."

"You're a child—a babe—a nincompoop, boy—I tell you, people can't marry without money."

"Why, I've often heard dear Mamma Mapletoft declare, she hadn't a penny in the world when good Mr Mapletoft married her."

"What's that to the purpose?"

"Pat—my dear uncle," said the shrewd boy, who, as he warmed in his subject, found his advantage, and closed with his adversary.

"Pat—devil!—I tell you what, Pen, I won't talk with you—you're an obstinate, self-willed, impudent"——

Here exhausted in argument, and at a loss for words, he dismissed the boy, with the information that on the Monday following he should carry him off to his father's house, for the express purpose of removing him from the danger—"Ay," he added, "there, you young whipper-snapper, you'll be safe enough."

Desperate, indeed, must the state of affairs have appeared to honest Caleb, when he resolved to place the boy under his father's roof. The fact, however, is, that he had previously arranged the matter with Mr Griffith Owen; and although the latter would not give up an iota of his own plans, (upon which, nevertheless, he had arrived at no definite conclusion,) Caleb had agreed to be at the whole expense of carrying them into effect.

Could the good man really and clearly have communicated to the lad, in set and intelligible terms, all that he had confusedly got together in his own head, he would have told him what it would have been as well he had not thought about for some years to come; but as he submitted himself to the cross-examinations of a child, (more perplexing sometimes, between ourselves, gentle reader, than the subtlest and pertest of the long-robed practitioners at Westminster,) he left much to the imagination which had never entered even into his own calculations. He had pointed out a closet full of sugar-plums and *bons bons*, by desiring the boy not to open it, and Pen retired with a conviction of having gained a victory, not only by beating the enemy at his own weapons, but by carrying off a booty he had never contemplated.

Laden with these spoils, he ran to his better half, and shared them all with her, as he would have done had they really been the contents of a *bonbonnière*. Good uncle Caleb had made a peep-hole for them, and they themselves found an opening for stronger light.

Long before the projected removal of our hero, mutual vows were exchanged between Pen and his little wife, and an oath, as big as themselves, taken upon a broken sixpence (a custom which they had picked from another source of judicious instruction,) that nothing should ever prevent their loving each other dearly, and marrying when they came to a marriageable age, whenever that might happen—a period which they did not pretend to anticipate, as Caleb, in his well-judged communications, either forgot or did not think proper to mention it.

CHAPTER XI.

Now, having presented my hero under circumstances which may well silence the scruples of the most sentimental reader—having exhibited in his person the influence of love over his destiny before he had fairly entered his teens—and having afforded a sample of what may be expected from so determined a hero in his more advanced career, we must for the present follow the example of uncle Caleb, in separating the young people, and in preparing and qualifying the boy for the *Toga virilis*.

One instance of improving upon a prudent measure must be noticed, in illustration of our friend Caleb's character. In the course of the drive between Oldysleigh and the city of Bristol, having duly exasperated his nephew, by bestowing every epithet which has any relation to folly and weakness, upon the strong burst of his feelings at parting with his early friend, he peremptorily informed him that he had seen Oldysleigh for the last time, and must never think of returning to it.

Considering the moment chosen for the communication of this consolatory arrangement, some allowance may be made for the unfortunate object of it, who, in return, swore (though not aloud) that he would take the first opportunity of falsifying his uncle's predictions. If the uncle congratulated himself upon the firmness he had exhibited, (for it really almost broke his heart to assume it,) the nephew was no less charmed by the remedy it had suggested; and the father, who had speculated on the scene during the whole morning, was no less pleased than surprised at finding his son and Caleb upon the most amicable terms on entering the house.

After the first salutations were over, the philosopher began to examine the boy, whom he found to be a sound Latin scholar for his years, and with a good foundation laid for his progress in Greek literature. The general run of fathers would have rejoiced to have had a son capable of acquitting himself with so much credit; but Griffith Owen, who had prefigured a *tabula rasa* for his own experiments, grieved to find that a pedant, as he chose to call Mr Mapletoft, had been scribbling upon it, and making impressions which he feared all his future labours might never effectually expunge.

He was resolved, however, to do his best; and for this purpose fixed his eye upon one Saucraut, a scientific companion, with whom he had lately become acquainted in the literary circles of Bristol.

This gentleman was of German extraction, but was himself born in England. He had received a good education, and was possessed of talents, if the natural indolence of character, which had become habitual by long indulgence, had permitted him to give them free scope. That he had failed to make a distinguished figure in life, was a consequence easy to be conceived from these premises; but attributing his failure to a want of discernment in the public, and to a certain fatality which he supposed to hang about him, he became a sort of wanderer among the sciences, without a fixed preference for any, and could never be persuaded that there were two sides to any one circumstance or possession in life. Black was his only colour; and if the bright side of an object presented itself to his view, his mind, by some atrabiliary process, for which I do not pretend to account, possessed an intuitive faculty of changing it to his favourite hue. It turned every thing sour, as thunder does small beer. He was not so much a misanthrope as the self-condemned victim of every man's enmity. He felt assured that the whole world (a very small portion of which had ever heard his name) were compacted and combined in their efforts to persecute and annoy him.

This may be said to be a species of mental aberration; but the same may be predicated of all those whims by which a man is distinguished in society as an eccentric character. Saureaut had early imbibed certain notions; and finding them confirmed in some few instances, they gathered sufficient strength to overbear his judgment, and to settle themselves into a creed, which he never after had the power to abandon. The very influence they had obtained over his conduct made good the theory his imagination had built up. He became a peevish disagreeable companion; and those friends who were interested in him by connexion, or family ties, dropped off one by one, till he was left an insulated being in the world, literally the victim of his own wretched conclusions, and their effect upon his habits.

Griffith Owen became acquainted with this man at an advanced period of life, in one of his restless wanderings to the scientific society of Bristol. The attention of our projector was first arrested by his general taciturnity, and his disjointed but pointed sarcasms, which, having their source, as I have before observed, in the bilious secretions of this ascetic philosopher, carried with them a sort of epigrammatic sting, which Griffith chose to attribute to a source still more profound. Besides, he evidently disdained to walk in any beaten path,—a recommendation of no mean value in the eyes of our friend; and from his first interview (which happily occurred on the very evening when the discovery of his son's age was first made) he resolved, if pos-

sible, to secure his important aid in the future education of Pen.

As even the most rapid evolutions of Griffith's mind, however, were subjected to the process of analysis, and as, of course, many other subjects had obtruded themselves upon his attention in the interval, he had only despatched a note, the morning of his son's expected arrival, to request Saurecraut to dine with him on that day, reserving to himself the time and mode of introducing his intended request to the great man.

The travellers, therefore, were scarcely seated, when the distinguished personage appeared to answer the invitation.

He moved his head in token of salutation to Caleb and his *protégé*—then eyed them with a sullen sort of scrutiny, before he took the proffered chair.

Caleb stared with unaffected astonishment at his uncouth figure, bending under a load of flesh, which seemed to confound all the details of dress, and might have puzzled a skilful anatomist, even without it, to ascertain the exact distribution of parts. His stomach (for delicacy's sake) was scarcely distinguishable from his knees—and a triple chin, which lay folded on his chest, might be deemed debatable ground, to be definitely claimed neither by the upper nor the middle region. His head, preposterously large, had, no doubt, from all that was fermenting within, assisted the growth and vegetation of a volume of grizzly black hair, whose luxuriance had apparently never been checked by the artificial aid of brush or comb. Every feature was large in proportion, with the exception of a pair of cat-green eyes, which, buried deep in their sockets, would have been scarcely perceptible, had not their rapid and perpetual motion from side to side, as if to guard against approach from any quarter, fixed the attention of every one who came within their influence. The first impression might have been that of a *bon vivant*, from the crimson hue of his complexion and the rotundity of his contour, had not a nearer view banished the suspicion, and convinced the beholder that jollity was the last excess of which such a countenance could be suspected of being guilty. The little linen that appeared seemed ashamed to expose its doubtful tints to public view, and a seedy worn-out suit, of what appeared to have originally been intended for black, completed the general appearance of this formidable personage.

It is not surprising, therefore, that poor Caleb should be struck with his appearance, and less so that he should feel a sort of horror at the intimation which was conveyed by an enquiry of the servant as he entered the room, that he was to make one of the party at dinner.

The master of the house was absent at the moment of his

entrée; and the benevolence of Caleb having tempered his astonishment, he felt called upon to say something by way of entertaining his brother's guest.

"A very fine day, sir, this has been!"

"You found it so, I suppose," laconically replied Saureraut.

"I did indeed—Didn't you, sir?"

"No!"

"Bless me, how's that?—I'm sure the sun has shone out so"——

"Bah!"

"Bah!—I don't exactly understand you, sir."

"Not likely you should," retorted Saureraut, begriming his nose with snuff.

"This is very odd, my good sir.—Why then, I suppose the sun did not shine?"

"It did shine—upon the fools who looked upon it."

"Fools!—Body o' me!" exclaimed the startled Caleb, "and upon the wise too, methinks—the sun makes no distinctions."

"It shined not upon me"——

"Oh! I take you now—You have been shut up all day!"

"Bah!"

"By illness, sir?" kindly enquired Caleb, who began to suspect his companion was not quite in his sober senses.

"No—by myself."

"Confined, sir?" asked Caleb, still in the tone of sympathy.

"D'ye take me for a maniac?"

Caleb, astonished at the coincidence of the question with his own suspicions, started; but meekly replied, "I mean by illness, my good sir—you look"——

"Like a demon, you would say."

"Not I indeed," replied the receding Caleb.

"Like what, then!"

"Like!"——

Poor Caleb's forte did not lie in illustration—and a simile was out of the question—he therefore repeated "Like—like"——

"Ay—like what!"

Recollecting himself, "I did not venture to say you were like any thing, sir."

"Not venture—to say—like a monster!"

"Indeed, my good sir—I neither said nor intended any such thing."

"Bah!"

Caleb's fears were now confirmed, and he began to doubt the sanity even of his brother, in having brought and left him in such company. He had been told, however, and (rather unfor-

tunately, and very unlike himself, whose memory was by no means applicative) recollected at the moment, that to evince any thing like suspicion before men labouring under mental derangement is sure to produce increased irritation, so assuming one of his most benignant smiles, he addressed his companion again, in a lighter tone :

"No, indeed, my good sir—I only asked out of kindness, thinking it odd you didn't see the sun to-day."

"I have eyes in my head."

"That's the very reason I fear'd you had been kept within doors by indisposition."

"By indisposition—to the world."

"To the world?"

"Isn't it English?"

"Oh dear—yes—very good English—but I didn't exactly comprehend"—

"How should you?"

"Not my mother tongue?"

"The sense!"

"No—that's very true—not exactly, but——" wishing to divert the conversation, or drop it if possible, he was about to propose ringing the bell to enquire if Mr Griffith was ready for dinner, and for that purpose rose from his seat, and with a complacent eye always directed towards the philosopher, advanced to ring the bell—as he did so, he gently murmured something about dinner, "To my mind," he added; but having paused for a word, his learned companion sharply interrupted him :

"What do *you* know of MIND?"

The question, so like one of his brother's, staggered honest Caleb, and arrested his hand upon the bell-rope; but he felt compelled to answer.

"Mind!—Oh yes—I know all about it."

"All about it!" exclaimed Saucraut; "out with it then, in God's name!"

"Out with my mind, (checking himself at the unfortunate selection of words,) "out with what, sir?"

"Your metaphysics," accenting strongly the ultimate and penultimate syllables.

Caleb stared, and almost staggered. He looked first at his opponent, then at little Pen, who enjoyed the scene, and fully entered into the points which had puzzled his uncle. As the latter appeared to make an appeal to the boy, who was, I am very sorry to say, naturally prone to mischief, and had stuffed his pocket-handkerchief in his mouth during part of the conversation, he now whispered his uncle, that the poor gentleman called for his physics!

This decided the question in Caleb's mind, but still preserving his caution, he bowed with much urbanity to Saucraut, and taking his nephew by the hand, retreated towards the door. He kept his eye fixed on the object of his terror, till he had fairly placed both Pen and himself on the outside;—then stretching his head through the half-closed aperture, assured his patient, whose surprise had thrown his features into a stare hideous enough to confirm his madness with Caleb, that he should be satisfied in a minute, hastily closed the door, and turned the key on the outside.

Running straight to his brother's study, he entreated him to afford immediate aid to the unfortunate fat gentleman in the parlour. Griffith stared, and demanded what he meant.

"Mean! why, the poor devil has a fit on him, and took me for a doctor."

"Yes," added Pen, "he insisted upon having his physic without delay."

"Odds, my life!" exclaimed Griffith, "this is unfortunate—no, no—not that either—now for a trial"—and running to a large chest, which contained apothecaries' hall in epitome, discharged the contents of several phials into one large measuring glass, and descending with all expedition to the parlour, was much annoyed and alarmed at finding the door fastened. His brother Caleb, who had walked off with the boy in order to ensure his safety, was not at hand to explain.

Griffith called to the supposed invalid, but received no answer from the incarcerated philosopher, who considered the whole as a premeditated insult, which his offended pride would not condescend to notice. Any body in the house, with the exception of the master, would have perceived that the key, being on the outside, a very obvious mode of admission presented itself. His thoughts, however, were principally directed to the inside of the room, and his whole attention on the outside was occupied in comparing the ingredients of the mixture he held in his hand, and its probable effects on epilepsy, apoplexy, or simple syncope, whichever the case might turn out to be.

All this was the business of a few seconds, in a mind constructed like that of our friend Griffith, and he had receded from the door to the head of the kitchen stairs, in order to summon further aid in breaking it open, as the silence within contributed to increase the supposed urgency of the case.

His vehement exclamations soon brought up a little slovenly tea-boy, (as the Irish significantly designate the order,) followed by a dirty maid with a mop in her hand, and a woman, who acted as cook in this strange establishment, with a face to which she appeared to have drawn all the redness and heat of her own

fire. This united phalanx rushed up the narrow staircase in confusion, and obeying the injunctions of their master, brought their several forces to bear in one united effort against the door, which being of frail texture, yielded without resistance, and threw the whole corps sprawling on the floor before the petrified Saureraut. In an attitude of horror, surprise, and indignation, the philosopher threw himself back in his chair, with his legs under him, to avoid the mop, which was projected some distance before the housemaid by the force of her fall.

Griffith, rushing in at the breach, made directly up to his patient, whose contracted position, and countenance convulsed with anger, confirmed all that Caleb had stated. Attempting to force the nauseous contents of his glass down the throat of his victim, he encountered an opposition for which he was not prepared, and Saureraut, being the more powerful man of the two, saved his stomach indeed from the drench; but received it over his eyes, nose, and his whole body corporate—externally.

Finding the resistance so strong, which he attributed to the increased muscular action occasioned by the paroxysm, Griffith called upon his auxiliaries to hold the patient down in the chair, till he returned with his lancets and cupping glasses.

The wretched victim, who could only attribute to wanton and premeditated insult the whole of this organized conspiracy, now found his voice; but being only able to articulate a string of unconnected oaths, the alarmed junto redoubled their efforts to retain him in their grasp. By a dexterous and sudden jerk, however, he despatched the cook and her female coadjutor, and giving the tea-boy a kick which sent him in the direction of the door, he rushed forward, and oversetting the approaching operator, with all his cupping glasses, lancets, and scarificators, which lay '*spolia opima*' on the field of battle, he strode over the bodies of his scattered enemies, and roaring vengeance, made good his retreat from the house.

CHAPTER XII.

LIKE the great question which is constantly agitated among politicians of a higher quality, whether this or that war be just or not just, necessary or not necessary, the social war with which our last chapter concluded, will be discussed and canvassed according to the political bearings and prejudices entertained

by the several sorts of readers, who may take up the business in their closets or their drawing-rooms. But, although it may sometimes answer a very good purpose to annoy an adversary, or to raise an opinion of our own judgment, it is, upon the whole, rather useless to dwell and declaim upon past and irrevocable events. It is wiser, take my word for it, to look forward to the means of getting out of a scrape, than to trouble ourselves and our friends by looking back, to ascertain how we got into it. In the case immediately before us, we have a right to infer, from the relative position of the belligerents, that the fate of the campaign is decided, and that, too, like others which have preceded it—by a single battle. Our attention, therefore, is more particularly invited to a consideration of the results, and the probable basis of future pacification. The *uti possidetis*, perhaps, would be objected to by the philosopher Saureraut, from a very obvious cause; and there might be some difficulty in adjusting terms relative to the *status quo ante bellum*, when we consider what he carried off the field, and what he left on it.

It would be a difficult matter, indeed, to estimate the extent of the indemnity to be demanded on either side, although the case is not altogether without due precedents. The hostile movements of the two leading powers can be attributed to a breach of faith on neither side; for, although they became principals, they were brought into the field by a third power, which (with parallels also in the history of more potent states) left them in the lurch to carry on the war, without knowing why or wherefore.

Caleb might, to be sure, have been justly called upon to subsidise, or at least to indemnify his brother Griffith; but then he might demur, in consequence of the forced alliance into which the said Griffith had thrown him with the other belligerent, Saureraut, as the war arose out of a misunderstanding between them; and further, because he withdrew before the commencement of hostilities, which, he might conscientiously assert, he neither proposed nor anticipated.

It will be perceived that the question becomes more complicated as we advance; and this is invariably the case with all questions of a similar nature; and hence the wise conclusion, that it is easier to get into a war than to get out of it. Making, therefore, the best of a bad business, we must leave the blushes of the cook-maid to heighten, at the view of the joint, burnt to a cinder on her return to the kitchen—the housemaid to lament over her instrument of office, which had been defiled with the miraculous mixture from Griffith's laboratory—and the tea-boy to make up his account with his master, for having neglected to

put the spigot into the faucet on being summoned into the field, and thus wasted the supplies in his immediate department.

To balance the account between the principals, we have only to observe, that if Professor Saurcraut had reason to complain of loss of dinner, Griffith Owen was not much better off, his dinner having been spoiled. If the former had sustained an injury in his rusty black habiliments, by the surcharge of villanous medicine, the pains and labour, together with the whole of said medicine, had been lost upon the other. If the one had just cause to be surprised and offended, the other had no less cause for complaint, in having his meditated benefits turned into an offence; and if Griffith Owen mistook the professor for a madman, the conviction was, to the full, as strong on the mind of the other.

Thus matters stood pretty equally balanced between them; but Caleb, who could be suspected of no such aberration, quickly established himself on the open high road which led him and his giggling charge to the Bush tavern, where they coolly discussed the contents of a tureen of soup and a hot beef-steak, without referring to the late transaction, further than as it called forth an occasional ejaculation from honest Caleb of "Poor man! I wonder they don't take better care of him!"

In the evening, after having duly reconnoitred the state of the camp in College Green, he ventured, with his nephew, to enter his brother's quarters, when, to his surprise, he found him surrounded by manuscripts, and writing like one of his own clerks, on the eve of the new year.

"Body o' me, brother! what have you done with the madman?"

"What madman?"

"Why, that crazy porpoise of a gentleman who dined with you."

"Dined!—no one dined with me: I have had no dinner."

"No dinner!—why, where's the sick man?"

"Oh, Dr Saurcraut!—indeed I know not: he refused my prescription and wouldn't be bled."

"Pray, let me ask, Griffith, now he is safely gone—what could induce you to invite a man in his situation to your house?"

"I didn't know he was to be ill."

"Ill! why, he's mad as a March hare, Griffith."

"Fiddle!"

"Fiddle!—why, he did nothing but bah, bah, like an old broken-winded belwether, till he wandered into some nonsense about being shut up in himself, and never seeing the sun."

"You didn't comprehend him, brother."

"Not I, in truth."

"He is one of the first men in his line."

"In what line, may I ask, brother?"

"In—in—his own line."

"I'm sure it's a crooked one, then."

"He's a philosopher, Caleb; he's out of your line."

"Truly is he, thank my stars! Have you ordered him to be shut up again?"

"Shut up!"

"Yes: he told me as much, in his way—that he had been shut out from the world, which is, I suppose, a roundabout way of telling me"——

"You mistake these things, Caleb: he is far above the world."

"The more's the pity."

"What?"

"That he should be rich, and yet be unable to enjoy himself."

"Rich!—he's as poor as a rat."

"How is he then above the world?"

"His mind I speak of."

"Oh!" cried Caleb, "he is out of that—poor man!"

"He has more learning than a whole university, Caleb."

"Ay, that it is has driven him mad."

"I tell you, he is no more mad than you are. I invited him to my house—caressed—courted him, in spite of the roughness of the husk—to apply the rich kernel to my own purposes."

"What, is he in the army?—some bad wound, I suppose"——

"Psha, brother—you mistake—I tell you he is a scholar and a philosopher."

"And a colonel, too?"

"Zounds—he is no colonel—I spoke of his core."

"What corps does he belong to?"

"Why the devil!——Caleb, you are bent upon tormenting me; is it not enough that this unfortunate fit should have diverted him from my service—but"——

"Your service!—why you weren't going to hire him?"

"To solicit him, I was, brother."

"To what?"

"What—why to take charge of the education of my boy."

"Of me!" exclaimed Pen, starting from his chair.

"Of my nephew!" cried Caleb, looking towards the door.

"Who else!——It would have been the making of the boy."

"The making him a mad one then," roared Caleb, who could stand it no longer; and starting on his legs—seized the arm of his brother, and said, in a subdued tone, "Griffith, Griffith, you are not well—take advice—you have looked heated for some time—don't be angry—I assure you, I think you have taken too little exercise lately—you will be better for advice. Shall Pen step for Dr" ——

"Look ye, brother," said Griffith, shaking off Caleb's hand ; "you either intend to provoke and irritate me, or you are playing the fool without knowing it."

"I—hands off, Griffith—odds, my life, is it thus you treat my cares for you ? Follow your own way—but don't lay a finger on me—not a finger, Griff."

"Griff!—stand off or"—

"Stand still, or"—

Here he stuck, and could get no further ; and it would have been an even bet, which of the twain had been suffocated with his anger first, had not poor Pen thrown down a glass retort, filled with the precious product of a week's labour, and in catching at it, to break its fall, scattered its caustic contents on the back of an unfortunate turnspit, who had retired from his drudgery below stairs to his master's fire-side.

On feeling the sting of the application, the poor animal set up a yell, as if a score of red-fisted Welsh cookmaids had been pursuing him through his native village. Caleb's attention was immediately directed to the suffering animal ; Griffith's rage turned upon the boy, who would have fallen a victim to his ire, had not his active life at Oldysleigh enabled him to leap over the table of MSS., and secure his retreat on the other side ; not, however, without giving a new direction to the inflamed passions of his gasping father, by carrying along with the tail of his coat, a dozen loose sheets, at least, of his learned labours.

In the midst of this confusion, in which the attention of all parties was fully occupied, what was their surprise at the unexpected intrusion of Saureraut, who had gained admission unheard, during the heat of the affray.

The action was as suddenly suspended—Caleb left the dog to assuage his own agonies (which he was attempting to do by rolling himself among the MSS. of the philosopher,) and staring, with a countenance which might have been taken by Le Brun as a much better model of terror, than any he has condescended to copy—chattered between his teeth, "For God's sake!—the keeper!—the keeper!"—when at the moment perceiving a strange face within the shade of the door, he gained courage, and called in a louder and more peremptory tone to the man, to secure his prisoner. To his inexpressible delight, the stranger stalked forward, but passing by Saureraut, without any further invitation, except the direction of that gentleman's finger, seized Griffith Owen as his prisoner, and produced his warrant for so doing.

"That's not your man," exclaimed the now again terrified Caleb, running to his brother's aid, to whom their common

danger had instantaneously reconciled him—"That's not your man—See, see, how he grins:—seize him, sir! For the love of Heaven, seize him!"

"Here's my warrant, sir, and this here's my man, as I take it," said the sheriff's officer (as he turned out to be) looking to Saurcraut, who signified by a ghastly grin that he was correct; when calling to Griffith to surrender, he was violently repelled by that gentleman, whose temper, we have had occasion more than once to observe, was none of the softest when too rudely called into action. He began to swear most volubly—and having armed himself with a large discharging rod, belonging to an electrifying machine which stood close behind him, and the only weapon at hand, menaced with his vengeance the first man who should advance a single step.

The officer, who being only a mercenary, and who felt he had the law as an ally, simply answered, as he retreated before the formidable and unknown weapon of Griffith, "Remember the consequences."

His admonition was unheard or unheeded by the person to whom it was directed. Saurcraut, however, who was more interested, and whose bile had now increased to an overflow, urged the retreating caitiff forward, who, pressing with this two-fold weight upon Griffith, forced him to give way a few paces. He, however, stepped on the insulated stool of the machine, to give himself the advantage of higher ground, and was preparing to discharge the whole weight of his weapon upon the enemy, who now grappled with him—when lo!—to the utter horror and dismay of Caleb, who had retreated to the door to facilitate his escape, and was only detained by his love of Pen, whom he wished to make the partner of his flight—the whole of the combatants, as if by a stroke from heaven, lay flat and motionless extended upon the floor!!

In order to account rationally for an event, which might have astonished a far more enlightened personage than Caleb, we must recollect the situation of the unfortunate boy, who, like Helen, lay *perdue*—although he had provoked the war, and indeed been the whole and sole cause of it, from the beginning to the present critical moment.

When hostilities took a new turn, upon the arrival of Saurcraut and his auxiliary, he had risen from his crouching posture behind a voltaic battery and the aforesaid machine, which was one of extraordinary power, and formed for the purpose of comparing the forces of the two instruments. The impression upon his mind was very different from that made upon Caleb by the passing scene: the one was overpowered by mistaking the motives of action; the other was charmed with the mistake

which he perceived, and half suffocated with laughter at the delightful confusion it created.

He was enough of a philosopher to know that the machine, upon the wheel of which his hand rested, could add nothing to what was going forward without being charged, and that the whirling of it would as assuredly charge it. With a little of the confusion to which he had an hereditary claim from his worthy father, he did not exactly know how to apply the force collected against the parties in question—not that he was so undutiful as to include for a moment his father in his proposed machinations, whom he considered, if he considered at all, as a mere conductor for his purpose. To work he went—charge—charge—charge—but no effect followed; when just as the machine was indeed fully charged, fortune, as if to encourage a new tyro in philosophy, impelled Griffith in his retreat to mount the fatal stool, whence, thinking to bestow the instrument with more effect upon his antagonists, he threw back his arm to return with redoubled force, when the rod coming in contact with the main conductor, the shock was so powerful as to level friend and foe, and suspend their faculties for several minutes.

Caleb thought the end of the world had come upon them, and uttering an ejaculation of horror, rushed out of the house. Pen, who dreaded bringing the house about his own ears by the discovery of his machinations, also made good his retreat, and, joining his uncle in the street, joined him also in wondering at the miraculous events which had just taken place. Caleb kept intuitively every turning and path to which he had been accustomed for years, interrupted only by occasional starts, and an ejaculation now and then of—"Terrible, indeed!—Tremendous miracle!"

Having, however, somewhat recovered his self-possession, by the time he arrived at his own door, he rang the bell, scraped his shoes, waited for the servant's arrival, and observed all the prescribed forms of his usual routine, when, as if by a violence alien to his character, he turned himself round, and began to retrace his steps. "Where are you going, uncle," cried Pen.

"Back again," was his only reply; and with the utmost exactness he retrode every step he had previously taken. The boy, who dreaded nothing so much as an eclairsissement, stepped before him on the threshold of the door when they arrived at his father's, and turning upon him, looked him full in the face, with such an assumed countenance of terror, that the image was caught by Caleb, and his first impressions returned upon him with all their force.

"Oh! uncle, uncle, you wouldn't venture back into that terrible chamber!"

"Hey!—what!" returned Caleb.

"You wouldn't encounter"——

"Oh! that devil of a madman—what could he have brought in his pocket!" exclaimed Caleb, whose ideas of superhuman agency had yielded to something more rational, when he perceived his brother's house standing just where it did before.

"For Heaven's sake, uncle, let us go from this dreadful place."

"Ay, ay, dreadful enough; but no, no!—stand out of the way—I forgot—my poor brother may be even now in need of assistance—out of the way, sirrah; your father may be dying or dead, for ought we know;" and so saying, he rushed into the house, where all was silent, indeed, as the chamber of death.

The study of Griffith retained all the marks of the late *tour-billon*; but the active agents were gone. Caleb applied himself to the bell; but no one answered the summons. He searched all the rooms, but could find nothing to reveal the mysterious circumstances of this general desertion.

Again, some confused notions of superstition invaded his mind, and he sat down in his brother's chair, overwhelmed by his emotions.

"My poor Griffith! why did I take offence at your oddities? what had I to do with your mad doctors and your rich colonels? Thou wert always a wiser and a better man than I."

Then starting up, he again applied himself to the bell; and as his ideas always travelled in a circle, again went in the same order into every chamber he had previously explored. The night was dark, and he had no means of obtaining a light. The fire was nearly extinguished, and he had mechanically poked it out.

Pen began to be as much surprised as his uncle; for, although he could very well account for the sudden prostration of the company, he had no clue to solve the mystery of their removal from the scene of action. He strove, however, to comfort his uncle; but, as it was necessary to withhold all that he really knew, and as he was utterly incapacitated from offering any conjectural consolation as a counterbalance, he was soon silenced.

Having waited more than an hour in this unpleasant situation, they heard somebody at the street door, and Caleb called aloud to know who was there. "Oh my stars!" exclaimed a voice, "art thee there, Maister Caleb?—why, I've been half over the town a'ter ye—ye had left your house, and nobody knew where to find ye. Oh deary me, here's such a commence!"

"Speak, woman," cried the impatient Caleb, who discovered it was one of the drudges belonging to his brother's establishment. "Speak, I say—d'ye know anything of my poor brother?"

"Lord love ye!—yes, to be sure, and that's what I wanted wi' ye—they're going to lock him up."

"Lock him up!—you mean that devilish Dr Madman."

"I say as it's my poor master."

"Where! where!—I've looked in every room in the house."

"I'facks, ye mought look long enough—it's in no house."

"No house!—how's he locked up then?"

"Why, in Bridewell—at least a wud be if"——

"What!"

"As sure as eyes is eyes, I see'd them going to pack him off, for want of something—something"——

"What—why don't you say what?"

"I can't think o' the name they calls it."

"What sort of thing?"

"I never see'd nothing like it."

"Odds wounds, woman! can't you say what's wanting?"

"Why no, else I'd tell ye; but I know it's yeerself that's wanted, though that ben't the name on't."

"Why didn't you say so before, you foolish old——where am I to find him?"

"La!—why, at the mayor's, to be sure."

"Plague take thy stupidity! Lord forgive me!" exclaimed Caleb, as he rushed past her, and hurried forward to the justice room.

Little further need be said. The reader must have been quicker-sighted than Caleb, especially if he be, which I hope and trust he is, a man of the world. Professor Saurecraft had, very naturally for a man of his temperament, taken Griffith Owen for a practical joker, instead of a practical philosopher; and when he escaped from the combined forces, in the full flow of his angry passions, at being made, as he supposed, a laughing-stock, had hastened to a magistrate, where, in the distorting language of passion, he swore the peace against the innocent Griffith and his whole household. He charged them with having drawn him into a snare, for the purpose of committing an assault upon his person—at the same time displaying the pickle in which Griffith had enveloped his person.

The law took cognizance of the offence, and a warrant was made out for the apprehension of the parties.

What followed is known to the reader, with the exception only of one circumstance, namely, that upon the prostrate parties, in the second campaign, having recovered their legs, the battle would probably have been renewed, had not a *corps de reserve*, in the shape of two catchpoles, who had been stationed at the door as a measure of precaution, rushed in, and secured the person of Griffith Owen, together with the whole of his household troops.

They were immediately carried before the mayor, where the

vindictive spirit of Saureraut, and the boiling indignation of Griffith, equally incapable of explaining the nature, quality, or origin of the offence, left the magistrate in doubt what steps to take to satisfy, or do justice to the several parties. At length, coming to the wise resolution of examining the witnesses separately, and shutting the principals up in two separate apartments, enough was elicited from the domestics to ascertain that the whole had arisen from some misunderstanding, and that all that was necessary to clear it up, was to give the parties time to cool.

Griffith was summoned, but when bail was required for his future appearance, he flew into a new rage, and expended at least fifteen shillings worth of gentlemanly oaths, in confirmation of his resolution to do nothing which had the appearance of compromising with "that infernal quack miscreant, Dr Saureraut."

The professor, equally strenuous in his own cause, swore that he would admit of no bail; but the magistrate reminded him that the affair was out of his hands now, and that he must abide by the laws of his country.

Griffith was again applied to for bail, and several persons present, to whom it was not likely a man of so much notoriety should be unknown, offered themselves for the purpose; but he only repeated his determination to submit to nothing derogatory to his character, or indicative of his admission that there was any ground for his opponent's charge.

The mayor expressed his regrets; but assured him, if he still persisted, he should be compelled to commit him. Griffith, by this time, had shut the court and the world out altogether, and, in his prospective view of the case, was pleading his own cause, removed by certiorari to the courts at Westminster, before the lord chief-justice of England.

The magistrate, in consideration of his family, laboured to save him from the disgrace he thus wantonly incurred, and despatching one of the female servants for his brother Caleb, called on some other business, which had been postponed in consequence of this extraordinary transaction. Now it so happened on this fatal day that Caleb, as we have seen, and as I believe I am authorized to say, for the first time in his life, had deviated from his usual routine in one single particular, punctual as we observed him to be in every other; and having turned from his own door without entering it, and without specifying to his servant the precise place to which he was going, which was his constant custom, he was not to be found when wanted—a thing never heard of before among those who were best acquainted with the habits of Caleb Owen.

The time occupied in the pursuit, which was ultimately successful, only by the irregular movements of the cook wench, she

having stepped in to put on her best bonnet, in which the tip-staves above mentioned would not, in the first instance, allow her to adorn her fair person, stumbled upon the very being of whom she had been in search, and in the only place where she was satisfied he certainly was not.

Caleb, out of breath, appeared in the justice room, just as the sitting was breaking up, and running up to his brother, caught him in his arms, exclaiming to the mayor, "Bail him, bail him to any amount; here's my security—for heaven's sake, Mr Mayor."

"Mr Caleb Owen," replied the mayor, "your brother is already bailed, and might have been so an hour ago, by several gentlemen present."

"God bless them—God bless them! Mr Mayor."

Griffith, with tears in his eyes at the sincere expressions of interest on the part of Caleb, grasped his hand, and assured him that all was well, and that "he would trounce that scoundrel," pointing to Saureraut, who stood like an angry demon compelled to attend the summons of some potent magician, personated, on the present occasion, by a shrewd, sarcastic-looking fellow, with a lank head of hair, a leer in his eye, and a pen behind his ear.

It may be necessary to explain the scene which passed in our temporary absence from the court, so far as to inform the reader that the little man who was thus putting the professor to the torture, was a hungry attorney, who plied about the minor courts, and who, foreseeing much sport and some profit, if the business was not suffered to evaporate, had whispered Griffith that the real mode of proceeding was to retort the charge, and file a cross bill, as it were, against Saureraut for assaulting and battering *him*—which chiming in with the feelings of Griffith, he proceeded immediately to act upon the advice. Being assured that his opponent was compelled now to find bail also, he readily accepted the offers made in his favour, and was leaving the court as his brother entered, full fraught with the hope of sufficiently avenging himself for the exposure to which he had been subjected, and chuckling under the impression that Professor Saureraut would sleep in a lock-up house, for want of sureties.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE brothers, on their return home, began to talk over the several incidents of the day, which had indeed proved a most eventful one—and rarely had they ever sat down, with less disposition to disputatious discussion, than on the present occasion. Caleb had not recovered from the alarm which the situation of his brother had occasioned; and Griffith could not, without emotion, reflect upon the fraternal interest and anxiety he had witnessed in Caleb in the course of the late transaction. Every thing bespoke peace of a long continuance between friends, connected by a common interest and common feeling.

“It is a delightful thing, brother Griffith, for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

“One forms no friendship or connexion in life, Caleb, so binding or so sacred.”

“None, my dear Griffith—it is the balsam of life.”

“The *elixir vitæ*, Caleb.”

“Wasn't that the thing that killed your poor friend, Dr Wintletrap, brother Griffith?” asked Caleb, with a look of conciliatory benevolence.

“Errors excepted, as you would say, brother Caleb—it was the not having it that may be said to have killed him.”

“Ay, ay—just the same thing.”

“As light is to darkness, Caleb.”

“Brother, you know I don't profess much knowledge in these things—I'm none of your philosophers, Griffith!”

“No, Caleb, no—we all know that.”

“And yet, my dear Griffith”——

“Yet what, my dear Caleb?”

“I found out this mad Dr Thingumbob long before your philosophy did.”

“Psha, Caleb!—I knew the fellow well enough.”

“Knew him, Griffith!”

“Ay—saw through him”——

“Through him!—how then could you ever think of putting that dear boy under his care?” nodding towards Pen, who lay back half asleep in his chair.

“Merely an experiment, Caleb.”

“An experiment!—Why, body o' me, brother, you wouldn't make experiments upon your own child!”

“Why not?”

“Why not!—why not!—because I think it would be an unnatural sort of thing—that's all.”

"The most natural thing in the world, Caleb—I have made them often upon myself."

"So you have, brother—and that should be a warning."

"A warning!—as how, prythee, Caleb!"

"As how!—why, has it succeeded with you?"

"Or how should I be where I am, Caleb."

"And where the devil—Heaven forgive me!—where are you, brother Griffith?" looking round and surveying, with a groan, the meanly furnished apartment, making no allowance whatever for the treasures and litterings of philosophy—"where are you, I should like to know, my brother?"

"Where your imagination cannot reach me, Caleb!"

"Why, haven't I eyes? Don't I see you in a miserable hired apartment, instead of your poor father's substantial house—in want of ten pounds, when you could have commanded hundreds?"

"Zounds, Caleb, where are you driving?"

"I'm driving at nothing, Griffith—I'm speaking plain truths, to prove"——

"Your ignorance of circumstances."

"Not of yours."

"Your ignorance altogether, Caleb."

"Not so ignorant, brother Griffith, as to take a mad quack doctor, as I heard you yourself call him at the mayor's"—but suddenly checking himself—"Yes, yes, brother, I forgot—give me your hand—I shall never forget seeing you at the mayor's—I wouldn't say any thing unkind to you for the world, you know—no, no!—You saw all right, I'll be sworn"——

"Well, well, Caleb—I meant no offence—only you shouldn't laugh at my philosophy—it is at least an innocent pursuit."

"An angel might follow the business, Griffith, for any thing I know to the contrary—I'm sure I'll never say any thing against it again."

"Thank you, Caleb, thank you—I take this very kind."

"This is as it should be—let's say no more.—But, Griffith"——

"My dear Caleb!"

"How did you contrive, with your philosophy, to knock down that devil of a doctor, and the devil's follower, all at a blow, as it were?"

"Well thought of!—Now you recall the circumstance to my recollection, I really am puzzled to make it out."

"Make it out!—why," with his eyes starting out of his head, "how in the name of mercy happened it?"

"The devil take me," began Griffith.

"Fie, fie, Griffith!" interrupted Caleb, "beware!"

"The devil take me," repeated Griffith, "if I know how the shock was given."

Young Pen's ears began to tingle; and, though now wide awake, he assumed the posture of sound sleep.

"The shock, Griffith!"

"Yes—there was no one to charge the machine."

"Mum!" sighed the culprit in the corner.

"And yet it must have been charged," continued the philosopher, who, now totally disregarding his brother's enquiries, began to reason with himself aloud.—"Charged and discharged without hands! Hey—what! Suppose—I have it!—there must be some sympathy—some affinity—~~some~~ chain of connexion between the voltaic battery and"—

"There it is!" ~~exclaimed~~ the boy Pen, starting from his affected slumber, and delighted at the idea of his father's suspicions having taken a wrong direction—"there it is, sir!" pointing to the chain, which had been, in the afternoon's scuffle, entangled among the plates of the galvanic apparatus.

"What do you know of the business, sirrah?" demanded the father.

The question was awkwardly worded for the boy's fears; but boldly answering that he saw a blue flame run along the wire just before the explosion, Griffith jumped up, and in a transport of joy clasped the boy, for the first time in his life, closely to his breast.

"A philosopher in the cradle!—a miraculous youth!—an Admirable Crichton!—an Ingenhouth!—a Muschenbroek!"

"A what!" exclaimed Caleb.

"A beatification of Boza!"

"Mad—mad, by this good light!" cried Caleb aloud.—"Why call the boy by such devilish names?—aren't ye afraid, Griffith?—Let go the boy."

"We've met to part no more, Caleb! The boy has elicited a spark which shows what he is made of! I told you so, Caleb—I told you so years ago, but you wouldn't believe me."

"Believe what?—You're stark staring mad, *that* I believe.—But"——

"Did I not declare to you the boy would—must be a genius?"

"But what has genius to do with all this rigmarole of nicknames?"

"Nicknames!—vile slander!—they are titles of honour."

"Not in this country, I'm sure."

"In every country of the civilized world, brother. I defy you to make me angry now. Thwart, tease, perplex me—all your shafts fall short, and cannot touch me. I love the boy—I love you—I love every body—I'm impenetrable as marble—my hopes are realized—the boy will be immortalized!"

"Why, what the dickens has he done," cried Caleb, "to rob you of your wits?"

"Done!—every thing!—Look ye there, brother Caleb!"

"What's that?—an old jack-chain!"

"A jack-chain!"

"Yes, a d—d dirty jack-chain!—Heaven forgive me, but you'd make a parson swear!"

"It will chain him, Caleb, to the car of fame, and blazon the name of Pen Owen in characters of gold."

"What! It's the old fudge of gold-finding, is it? Much joy to you, brother. Come, come, the boy shan't be lost in this wild-geese scheme; come along, Pen, come along, I say, 'tis late—you mustn't stay to be bit—troop, boy—troop."

"The boy shall not stir a step, by"——

"What!"

"Not an inch"—— (ringing the bell with great violence.)

"Not go home to my house?"

"Never shall he stir from mine," (here the servant entering, he ordered a bed to be prepared for his son.)

"Have a care, Griffith!"

"I have nothing to care for now, Caleb."

"I will discard you both."

"Discard yourself, silly one."

"Ay, cut you off—I'll abandon you to your own cursed ways. Heaven forgive me! Nay, nay, but the boy will go with me."

"Not he, be assured brother."

"I say he must."

"By the majesty of science, never!"

"Then for ever"——

"For ever."

"Pen, my boy, would'st refuse thy uncle—thine own dear uncle?"

"Silence, boy," exclaimed Griffith. "On your allegiance and duty answer not—stir not."

"Very well, Mister Griffith Owen—if you repent not this, may I be"——

"And if I do, may I be"——

"Oh!" screamed the boy—off flew the uncle—and down sat Griffith in his arm-chair, ruffled, indeed, by what had just passed; but quickly lost in admiration at the wonderful instance of the boy's genius, displayed in saving himself from an apprehended flogging.

If the reader should share in some measure the surprise of poor Caleb, we confess ourselves at a loss how to reconcile the sudden impression made upon the philosopher's mind, other than as one of those instances of the eccentric mode of reasoning

which appears to be the essential characteristic of a speculating philosopher. We have observed, that in the early development of this gentleman's mind, he had a strong propensity to account for such phenomena as presented themselves to his view, in any way rather than that which appeared to be the natural one.

That he should, therefore, sometimes bewilder himself, is naturally to be inferred, and that he occasionally lost himself, hath already, I should imagine, been proved to the satisfaction of the reader. Instead, therefore, of cross-examining the culprit Pen, which in a few minutes would have convinced him of his error, (for the boy had observed enough to save him from absolute falsehood, though certainly guilty, as even full-grown philosophers sometimes are, of exaggeration,) I say, instead of this plain and simple mode of proceeding, that he should, quick as the electric spark itself, have engendered a chimera in his mind, is, however absurd, any thing but inconsistent with his general character. He forbade the boy to speak upon the important subject to any one, which, for a very obvious reason, was considered as no very severe prohibition, and having dismissed him for the night, with every mark of admiration and affection, ordered his argand to be trimmed, and was soon lost to the world, and safe lodged in one of his own creation.

"What a tedious day!" I hear some yawning reader exclaim, laying down the book, "I thought we never should have come to the close of it. Does this very ingenious editor mean to give us a daily journal of proceedings through the life of his hero? Good Heaven, sir, the boy is only yet twelve years old—and let me see—one hundred and five pages!"

A truce, a truce, gentle reader, I cry you mercy; the boy shall grow faster in future, I promise you, without your being compelled to witness the progress; and by the aid of that magic—the only remnant of the black art preserved by the august body to which I have the honour to belong—you shall shortly see (in the true terms of the art) *what you shall see*; for it would take as long in telling you *what* now, as to go on with the history—so to sleep! to sleep! gentle reader; and slumber until I wake you to new interests and new objects.

In sober truth, it would be a tedious process if not a dangerous one, to follow a speculative philosopher through all his whims, fancies, and expedients, in the education of a presumed genius. We shall therefore merely touch on those prominent parts which may be necessary to keep up the thread of the history, without entering into any of the bye-ways, or parentheses as it were, in which our friend Griffith was daily involved.

Upon consulting my common-place book, I find it noted, that little Pen was for four months succeeding the eventful scene we

have just witnessed, constantly confined to the house without the possibility of escape, never being out of the presence of his affectionate father, who had made him read and transcribe all that ever had been written upon the subject of electricity, from Cavallo downwards, and all that the foreign or British journals could supply upon the discoveries in galvanism.

How far either the teacher or the pupil were the wiser at the end of that period, it is not for me to say: but certainly the former had not accurately ascertained that the self-acting voltaic battery could charge and discharge its neighbouring machine, (every attempt to repeat the experiment, strange to relate, having failed;) and the latter was in such a state of languor and lassitude for want of his usual exercise, that his uncle, when he at length beheld the boy, declared he was in a galloping consumption.

I cannot resist the temptation of informing my readers how the two brothers became reconciled, after the desperate resolution taken by both on their last separation. Caleb's resentment lasted long enough to support an absence of several days from the boy, who, he thought, might have been justified in revolting from his father's decision, and he was, indeed, angry with him for not doing so.

At the end of a week, however, he thought less of the cause of his irritation than the effect, and before a fortnight had passed away, he heartily wished for a reconciliation with his brother. But as no overtures had been made on his part, and as, considering his employment, there was little chance of any such being made, poor Caleb's pride—which was quite consistent, nevertheless, with his general humility—prevented him from taking any direct measures for his purpose. The longer it was delayed the more awkward became his situation; and he was known several times, during this period of suspense, to deviate from his accustomed walk, and to frequent the fields about Clifton, in the hopes of meeting his brother or his nephew. Fortune might have befriended him, had she been left to herself; but Griffith had secured the door against her, and Caleb was compelled daily to return despondingly to his own solitary fireside.

Being unable to bear this state of suspense and privation any longer, necessity, the mother of invention, suggested to the unexercised imagination of Caleb the happy expedient of a note, and after three days more of actual labour, he achieved and dispatched the following:—

“DEAR NEPHEW,

“I have been thinking I must have left my green shagreen spectacle case upon the table when I was last in College Green,

for it is to be found neither high nor low at home. Do,—that's a good boy—look for it, as it was the gift of a very dear friend. You may, perhaps, find it, and bring it to your loving uncle,
“CALEB OWEN.”

Now, there was more ingenuity in the note than the reader may be disposed to give the writer credit for. It was intended by the subtle inditer to bring down two birds with one stone—for the said shagreen spectacle case had been a present from his brother Griffith in happier days. This was a marvellous proof of his penetration into character; but he forgot that Griffith possessed two characters, and was a philosopher as well as a brother. The aim was well taken to hit the mark, had it stood singly; but the moment was not favourable, and the brother, on the arrival of the important note, was completely covered by the philosopher, and the shot fell off without penetrating beyond the surface, where it was just felt enough to cause a momentary irritation.

The boy opened the note before his father had noticed its arrival, but at length falling under his eye in the middle of a problem, the solution of which had long puzzled him, and was beginning to show daylight, as he thought, in a diagram at which the boy had been for some hours at work; he snatched it out of his hand, and reading it hastily, with a “Psha! the devil take the shagreen case—can't he get another,” he resumed the nearly broken chain of his investigation.

The servant, however, persisting in his demand for an answer, as Mr Caleb had directed him, Griffith in a rage dismissed him from his presence, and crumpling up the diagram, threw it into the fire, whilst, with returning calmness, he spread the unfortunate note before his pupil. He desired the boy, impatiently, to go on with the demonstration.

“It's my uncle's note, sir,” said the boy.

“Then where's the diagram?”

“Behind the fire, I believe, sir.”

“Believe! Then why, thou blockhead, why did you not save it?”

“You didn't tell me,” said the boy.

“Tell you—could you suppose—but no matter”——

And no matter is it to us what followed.

We have seen sufficient to show, that the ill-timed overture of poor Caleb was more likely to engender a new war than to effect a pacification. The return of the messenger was also productive of similar effects upon the irritable nerves of Caleb; indeed, the recoil occasioned a deeper wound. A verbal communication, unlike a bag of money or a basket of fruit, is sure

to be conveyed, especially if it be of a provoking quality, not only without diminution or subtraction, but with considerable increase and addition. The servant, who felt himself personally insulted on the occasion, declared that "both father and son had turned him out of the room—swore that Caleb was an old fool—and that he and his shagreen spectacle case might go to the devil."

Whether the truth would admit of this liberal paraphrase we must leave to the reader's candour; but in the form now presented, I think it will be admitted to be a sufficient provocation to rekindle the angry feelings of Caleb, and to keep them up for a few weeks longer.

It was not, indeed, until some months after the unfortunate transaction of Professor Saureaut's assault, that the brothers again met, which was indeed in court, when the cause, arising out of that eventful day, came on to be heard before the city sessions. On this occasion, Caleb's evidence, which was given in all the simplicity of truth, set the whole affair in the clearest light; and reason having re-assumed the seat which passion had usurped in the breast of each of the principals, the matter ended, as might be supposed, by a general oblivion, Griffith agreeing to pay such costs as had been ingeniously incurred under the able direction of his lawyer. This debt Caleb immediately insisted upon discharging; and the long alienation of the brothers rendered their reconciliation the more tender and affecting.

Caleb was no sooner out of court than he dragged his brother, almost by force, to the house in College Green, in order to see his beloved nephew, from whom he had been so long separated. But when he beheld him, starting back, he uttered an exclamation of horror at the sight of his pale and emaciated face—"Why, what in the name of Heaven is the matter with the boy!"

"Matter, Caleb," said his brother calmly—"what should be the matter with him?"

"Why, you have starved him!"

"Psha!"

"I say the boy's starved—look in his face—come here, my darling Pen—tell me what they have done to you."

Caleb, whose regularity of life, had precluded any particular observation upon the effects of confinement, want of exercise, and so forth, could find no sufficient cause for the pallid looks of the boy—but starvation.

"Oh! I have been a cruel brother, and an unnatural uncle: what had I to do with this nonsense, or that whim, or vagary: why didn't ye send him to me, if you wanted my assistance?—it was unkind—indeed it was, Griffith—it was very unkind."

"What!" exclaimed Griffith.

"Not to let me know your wants."

"Wants! I have no wants at present."

"At present! Ay, then you have applied elsewhere—it was unkind, Griffith—you ought to have known me. Why it has cost me more, to keep up my ill-humour, than it would, to have laid down half my fortune."

"You speak riddles, Caleb."

"Will you unriddle them, brother—will you tell me why you didn't apply to me, rather than let this poor innocent want bread?"

"Psha! Caleb."

"Indeed, uncle, I never wanted bread," said the boy.

"What, then, you had nothing but bread? Oh me, it's hard fare for a growing boy."

"Why Caleb, you are madder than ever," exclaimed the brother, "the boy has had every thing he could want—and is, moreover, so improved"——

"Improved!" ejaculated Caleb, still horror-struck with the boy's looks, "improved, why he's but a shadow of himself."

As usual, the conversation began in discussion, progressed to a dispute, and ended in a quarrel. The cooling process, however, was expedited, owing to the readier concession of Caleb, upon a question of such interest. Having, at length, convinced his brother that the boy was really sinking under his new system, a compromise was effected, and the study of mineralogy was, for the present, substituted for his late pursuits; by the terms of which, the boy was allowed daily to mount a pony Caleb had purchased for him, and to explore the neighbouring country for specimens.

Pen being now amply supplied with pocket money by his affectionate uncle, purchased of Mr Vamp, already mentioned in this history, a large stock of such materials as were necessary for his purpose, and producing certain portions on his return home every evening, not only satisfied Griffith of his great progress in his new pursuit, but astonished him by the success with which his daily researches were crowned, especially in the discovery of specimens, which had never been known, *previously*, to exist in that neighbourhood.

Had he once thought of accompanying him, he might, perhaps, have ascertained his error, and the imposition practised upon him; but this would have been too much in the ordinary course of things, for the suggestion of a mind like his. Pen therefore spent, for a few months, a most happy and idle life, for he had no sooner regained his liberty, than the prohibition of his uncle naturally gave rise to a wish to revisit the happy retreat of Oldysleigh; and thither, by the end of the first week, the pony

would have ambled, without bridle or rider, as naturally as if he had been a part of Caleb himself, the very prince of highwaymen; of course I do not allude to that obsolete class, whose exploits we of the present generation know only as matter of history: but the more regular, sober description of persons, who can tell you every turf and every stone between two given points, and would yet be at a loss to say, whether there be forest or morass on the other side of the hedges.

Pen daily saw, romped with, and kissed his little wife, Ellice Craig; and the worthy Mapletoft, not being aware of any interdict to their childish friendship, encouraged rather than checked the fondness of the children. It is true, after a certain time, he was somewhat surprised at finding Pen at the breakfast-table every day, and at Oldysleigh all day long; and without suspecting the truth, began to reflect, with some asperity, upon the neglect thus evinced by Caleb with respect to the education of his nephew.

He therefore thought himself called upon to make some enquiries of the boy, (this being winter time, during which Caleb Owen never visited the country,) and taking him into his study one morning, asked him whether these were his holydays, and what was the general plan of his studies; when Pen informed him, that his father had undertaken his education, and explained his system, as far as it could be collected from the measures already adopted.

The worthy vicar was shocked to perceive the consequences which had already appeared, and which threatened the issue of such a mode of discipline. Pen then candidly acknowledged, that he had been almost tempted to run away from his father's house, and was only withheld by those motives which this good man himself had early instilled into his mind; and further added the innocent deception he had practised, for the purpose of daily visiting the only spot in which he thought he should ever find happiness.

Mr Mapletoft smiled at his enthusiasm and inexperience; but reproved him for having practised the deception—showing him the danger of disregarding the means, even where the most desirable end is to be obtained. He proved to him also the impolicy of it, since even should he connive at it, which a sense of duty to his uncle forbade, it would be impossible long to conceal his plans; and that a resort to stronger measures would be justified, in order to prevent a repetition of his fault.

Pen admitted the justice of all these friendly observations, but, like many others who receive good advice, thought he might mend it, so as better to suit his own particular purposes; and having, on this occasion, a privy counsellor of more conge-

nial habits, he soon found in Ellice Craig a very able coadjutor in assisting him through his difficulties, and full as zealous in the cause as even dear Mr Mapletoft himself. They agreed, indeed, perfectly with that worthy gentleman, that Pen might be found out, and that probably he might be prevented from mineralizing in his favourite country. It was therefore settled that he should desist from his present mode of carrying on the war; but it was carried unanimously, (having been duly proposed and seconded,) that once a-week, at least, he should be permitted to make out, directly or indirectly, a visit to Oldysleigh; nay, so peremptory was the decision upon this head, that it was finally agreed, if Mr Mapletoft should interfere with the arrangement, still a congress, by fair means or foul, once in seven days, should be achieved between the high contracting parties.

Now it is possible that all this might have been carried without any secret associations or illegal oaths, had not the ingenious policy of the still higher powers (Mr Caleb Owen and his own cabinet council) put it into the heads of these young madcaps that there was something necessary to be concealed. They would both probably have gone boldly to Papa and Mamma Mapletoft, and requested them to contrive a holyday once a-week for their favourites; but, under the impression of a mysterious warning, and dreading a refusal, and a recurrence of such puzzling politics, they took the shortest way to their object, by resolving to see each other in spite of all obstacles.

Upon Pen's return home on this day, he found, to his utter horror and dismay, that formidable personage, Professor Saurcraut, in close and amicable conversation with his father; and after waiting some time in the adjoining room, in the hope of the gentleman's departure, the reader may easily surmise his further discomfiture on discovering that he was to make one of the party at dinner.

To the study the two philosophers—whose quarrels, it is to be presumed, like those of lovers, contributed to bring them together with redoubled ardour—adjourned after dinner; and the conference at a late hour was closed by an affectionate shake of the hand, and (to Pen's ears) the ominous declaration of Saurcraut, that he would not fail to be with his young friend by nine o'clock on the succeeding morning.

I will not relate, for it would be mere repetition, the interference and the consequences of it, on the part of uncle Caleb, against the measure of submitting his poor boy to this mad philosopher, which he still persisted in affirming him to be. The boy, restrained by what he had been taught to believe his first duty to his father, did not dare to take part with his uncle beyond a simple remonstrance in the first instance,—and his

neutrality, as is generally the case, was condemned by each as a separate act of disobedience to himself.

For nine months the brothers never met; and poor Pen was drilled over the surface of the sciences, to the utter demolition of every sound idea or notion which had pre-existed in his mind, when a very natural consequence—indeed two, considering what immediately followed—put a temporary stop to the plans of Griffith Owen, and his connexion with the profound cynic.

The perseverance of Griffith, in his new scheme of education, is only to be attributed to the congenial disposition of his colleague, who, as unsteady in his pursuits as himself, presented some speculative innovation at every step they took; and poor Pen, could his mind have been seen through a window in his breast, (for which there is as good authority as for the better half of Griffith Owen's speculations) I take upon me to say, it would have resembled nothing more vividly than that leaf of a blotting book now before me, upon which, gentle reader, I have regularly blotted every page of the foregoing history.

Professor Saucraut, who loved good eating, at least as well as he did any particular science, and much better than he did any particular individual, (one only excepted,) had compelled Griffith to dispense various dainties, and to add supernumerary luxuries to his establishment, which, the moment they were named by his friend, he considered to be necessities; and as he had never taken upon him the drudgery of accounts, since Mrs Amarantha had originally assumed the control of the household, it may well be supposed, that upon a contracted income, annually growing smaller, a sudden accession of claims upon it must produce the certain inevitable consequence of going near to annihilate it.

Now, a lamp may burn a long time without replenishing, supposing that there is any oil left to supply it; but it requires no philosophy to be aware, that if the oil be consumed, the light will go out. The fact is, Griffith's lamp would have been extinguished many years before, had not Caleb poured it in, in measured quantities indeed, but still sufficient for the purpose, to keep it alive. It would burn dimly at times; but this the philosopher never observed; and the longer the interval between any of those family dissensions, which we have so frequently witnessed, the greater the appearance of the philosopher being left—wholly in the dark!

In the present instance, however, the interval having been of a more extended duration than usual—and Caleb having resolutely refused to bestow any oil upon the *new consumer*, (or, as Griffith would have called him, less appropriately, perhaps, the *new light*,) the question of light or no light came to a rapid

decision. Leaving all metaphor—which has, nevertheless, I trust, enlightened the reader as much as it has delighted me—one gloomy day the lamp actually *did go out*, and at the same moment, by an unforeseen combination of circumstances, the bailiffs *came in*—and for the second time, Griffith Owen, without having the most distant notion of what was happening, found himself driven from what he considered his own freehold.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE first consequence of the revolution recorded in our last chapter, was the ready forgiveness of all real, or supposed injuries, on the part of Caleb—the second, the retreat of Mr Professor Saurcraut, who saved himself out of the terms of capitulation, by exhibiting the sagacity of a rat; so that, upon signing the treaty, the two reconciled brothers had not a single ground upon which to debate or dispute—at least, so it appeared upon the face of things: but alas! few there are, who know enough of the versatility of the human character, to decide such questions upon the superficial indications of probability.

Caleb had no sooner paid off his brother's incumbrances, and made him clear of the world, than a battle royal ensued, upon the renewed proposition of a partnership in the iron trade. An alienation of many weeks took place, during which poor Pen, who appeared to be inevitably and inseparably allied to his father's fortunes, was now confined in a close lodging up two pair of stairs, where Griffith had settled himself, and where the boy twice escaped suffocation from the failure of a chemical experiment, the materials for which had cost the philosopher his last guinea. Again Caleb's heart opened, and he proposed to his brother, that he should inhabit the villa at Oldysleigh, and that Pen should be sent to a public school.

It is not likely that two propositions, embraced in one interview, should pass without a controversy. They were met at once by a flat refusal—the one, on the ground that it was unbefitting an elder brother and representative of all the Owens, to be dependent upon a younger, who was, besides, a trader—the other, that of all his determinations, none was so decided as that which he had taken against a public school—he himself never having been at one, nor having ever met with a *real* man of science who had been.

Pen was now about fourteen, that is, after he had passed under the ordeal of Saurcraut, and had escaped martyrdom under a course of chemistry.

Between this period and his fifteenth birthday, he had been sent to Westmoreland, to fag mathematics under a hard-headed northern teacher; but his father having heard of a man who had discovered a royal road to the same, by which he pledged himself to perfect a scholar in half the usual period, he was withdrawn, after four months' residence in the north, and placed on the confines of Devonshire and Cornwall.

During the three succeeding years he passed under the hands of seven private tutors, selected by Griffith, and willingly paid for by Caleb, as it brought his dear boy within his own immediate reach. But this was not all; four distinct schools, in different parts of the kingdom, had, during this time, been successively tried; and these changes and counter-changes, occasioned by no imputable misconduct on the part of tutors or pedagogues, arose simply from the temptations held forth to the imagination of Griffith, by advertisements in the newspapers, or on the cover of some literary journal. The intervals between each of the plans aforesaid, were allowed to pass away as the young man chose; and, in some instances, he was left whole months to his own discretion.

Whether this directed him on the road to Oldysleigh or not, the reader may determine in his own imagination. Thus far I feel it, however, my duty to inform him, lest he should be infected with the same disease as Griffith, that in proportion as Pen grew to be a young man, his little wife, Ellice, grew to be a young woman, and that she was most unquestionably less warm in her expressions and less free in her manner than formerly.

Pen, still recurring to the original and sage interdict of his uncle, began to comprehend the mystery which had so puzzled him before—a proof, no doubt, of the high advantages he had gained at eighteen by the irregular and extraordinary education which the speculations of his father had afforded him.

Now I would by no means have the reader infer that the attachment between our young friend Pen Owen and Ellice Craig had suffered any diminution in its progress; so far from it, I verily believe it had “grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength;” but they had, on some account or other, become more reserved towards each other, and it appeared as if the more they loved the less able or less disposed were they to express it.

Uncle Caleb, of whose penetration into the character and motives of mankind we have had many remarkable instances.

drew from his observations on this subject the most consolatory conclusions, and sincerely congratulated himself upon the measures of precaution which he had so early taken, in order to break off an imprudent connexion ere it had taken too deep a root.

He observed, that so far from affording him any ground of suspicion, the young people appeared rather to avoid than court occasion of conversation; and the satisfaction he felt in again enjoying the society of his friends, the Mapletofts, and their orphan daughter, was so great that he almost fell in love with the fascinating girl himself. Indeed, if vanity had formed an ingredient in his character—considering certain others which made up the essential part of it—he might very well have been misled; for although Ellice Craig acted upon the reserve with her old playfellow Pen, she had redoubled her attentions to his uncle; and, moreover, bestowed upon him the most tender caresses and affectionate attentions.

Sir Luke Oldysworth, in the society of the Mapletofts and other neighbouring families, whose habits of life had formerly been considered not sufficiently aristocratical for the baronet, found resources, the existence of which he had never suspected.

He had, in the course of a few years, disciplined his mind, so as to reflect upon his past errors and their melancholy consequences with regret, unaccompanied by remorse; for he had deeply and sincerely repented of them. An occasional fit of intemperance upon a serious provocation would show the impossibility of utterly eradicating bad habits; but if we were to compare numerically the recurrence of these fits with those of a similar nature (though arising from a very opposite source) in uncle Caleb, the latter would have had it hollow against him. I speak only of occasions on which he came in contact with his brother Griffith; for it was a peculiarity in Caleb's temper, that he was never known to be in a passion with any one unless he loved him, always excepting a church methodist, whom, for some reason best known to himself—for he was a sincere and pious Christian, as I have more than once observed—he hated as much as he could be said to hate any thing.

With a mind thus regulated, Sir Luke was desirous to settle every thing connected with the property, in which he had now only a life interest, consistently with the dignity of the family and the principles of justice. He determined, therefore, to address himself to the heir at law, (a very distant connexion, with whom he had never hitherto held any intercourse,) stating to him how matters stood, and his desire to cultivate the acquaintance of those who were to succeed to so large and respectable a property upon his death.

Griffith Owen had been passing a few days with Caleb at Oldysleigh, in consequence of having just received intelligence of the total failure of a scheme for pricking oysters to generate pearls, in which for several years he had been embarked, and had just sunk the whole of the last advance of his generous brother. He happened to be present at the conversation in which Sir Luke—who now always consulted Mr Mapletoft and his neighbour Caleb upon his affairs—communicated his intentions, and having just exhausted speculation in assigning to a legitimate cause the death of the bed of oysters which his pricking scheme had thus destroyed for the market, and having nearly converted them into a cargo of manure, his attention was caught, and arrested by some observations of the worthy baronet, who in the course of conversation had observed, that two generations back there had been an intermarriage between his family and the Owens of Penptwphwly.

Griffith was in less than six seconds in the very core and sap of his genealogical tree. Here was an opportunity of redemption, and in the true legitimate way, of all the family honours; and entertaining no doubt of being able to prove himself heir at law to the Oldysleigh estates, he watched his opportunity of throwing in some impediment to the present proceedings, in order to afford time to make out his claim to the satisfaction of others.

After, therefore, Caleb and Mapletoft had heartily agreed with the baronet upon the principle and the propriety of the plan he had in view, Griffith interposed his opinion (without having been consulted,) and observed that "Speculations of this nature required to be duly analysed before they were adopted—hasty measures were to be avoided.

"Body o' me," cried Caleb, smiling, "why Griffith is turning over a new leaf."

"It is the leaf of experience, brother Caleb."

"Well, I must own you have had enough of that. But now, gentlemen" (turning with a satisfied look at his own penetration,) "I would bet a trifle, my brother is thinking of something else, all this while"——

"Not a bit of it, Caleb, I advise"——

"Not as you act, Griffith."

"Psha, Caleb—be quiet—a fool's advice may sometimes be taken with benefit—and"——

"Well, now," exclaimed Caleb, "if that is not the modestest, and wisest thing you ever said."

"Modestest—why, sure."

"To call yourself a fool—I'm sure that's too modest—for you are none and"——

"Zounds, brother, I called myself no fool—I would have said"—

"Ay, but you did say"—

"I tell you, Caleb, you are a ———; but I beg pardon, Sir Luke—my good brother is apt to draw hasty inferences."

"Hasty what, Griffith?"

"Yon don't know that you draw them. So prithee, Caleb, be quiet—I would have said, that if a fool may sometimes counsel right—I who do not profess much knowledge in business"—

"That's the thing again, and true—true as gospel," interrupted Caleb.

"I am addressing myself to Sir Luke and to Mr Maple—Mapletoft, brother; and I would only say—unused as I am to business, I think I have experience enough to know, that things done in haste are rarely done well."

"That," says Caleb, turning to the two gentlemen, in a tone of patronage and self-gratulation at the same time, "that is the wisest observation I have heard from my brother for many a day—and what is more extraordinary, it is business-like."

"Nothing can be more so," observed Mapletoft.

"It is unobjectionable," said the baronet. "I will not write till next week."

The point of delay being gained, Griffith hurried his brother off the field, lest he should prose himself and his companions into a reversal of the order; and having secured the door of the apartment into which he had pushed Caleb, upon their arrival at home, he threw himself into an arm chair, and exclaimed with a voice of joy, "The die is cast—our fate is decided, and fortune is again a friend to the Owens."

"Why, what ails thee, Griffith—what hast found—hey?"

"A mine."

"An Irish one!"

"No, no, Caleb—an English one—a gold mine—a"—

"An English gold mine—fiddle faddle, brother—another of your wild speculations!"

"Speculations!—fetch me the family tree, I'll show you something shall make you speculate with a feather in your tail."

"A feather in my tail, Griffith—why now, I verily believe thou art mad."

"Fetch the folio, Caleb, and I'll make you mad too."

"Why, you won't bite?"

"I don't know but I may."

"Nay, nay, Griffith, be composed—take something—here's Stoughton's drops—or Daffy's elixir."

"Throw physic to the dogs, Caleb."

"To the dogs—pearls to swine. Oh! the waste and profusion

of mad men!—that I should live to see my dear brother thus—nay, nay, be composed—I have heard all how and about the oysters—though I said nothing.”

“Confound the oysters!”

“Don’t mind them—I’ll make all good, I will indeed, Griffith.”

“It is I, who shall make *all* good, brother Caleb—hast no eyes—no ears—no sense alive about you?”

“No—indeed I begin to fear you have bit me, without my knowing it—I don’t know whether I stand upon my head or my heels!”

“I don’t wonder at it, Caleb, ’tis enough to turn any man’s senses.”

“Lack-a-day, what will become of us!”

“Become of us! buy up the whole of the Cwm Owen estates—pay the people off—give them double the value—apply for the dormant peerage—restore the castle of our fathers!”

Here Caleb could stand it no longer, but sidling towards the bell, gave it such a twist, that down came rope and all upon his head, certainly the weakest part of our poor friend, yet neither the accident, nor the countenance of the sufferer, could check the wrath of Griffith, who, starting from his chair, seized his unfortunate brother by both hands, and with a countenance, that would really have justified a less sensitively apprehensive mind than Caleb’s, of the utter insanity of the man—muttered between his chattering teeth—

“Fool—dolt, will you betray me?”

Caleb, the milk of whose kindness was, as we well know, apt to turn sour in a convulsion of his other elements, started back, on feeling himself bodily seized as it were, extricated himself with force, contrasting at the same time the suppressed tone of his brother; and vociferating as loudly as he could, “I’ll be d—d—Heaven forgive me—if I don’t have you secured—would you commit murder?”

The servants were now thundering at the locked door, and trying to force it open, when hearing the latter exclamation, they concluded of course, that some housebreaker had made his way to their master’s room. Griffith speculating upon the consequences of an explanation before such witnesses, suddenly changed countenance, and holding up his hands in the posture of entreaty, requested Caleb to send the servants away, as the interests of the whole family depended upon the present moment. Caleb, who when roused would resist a lion, would not have had the power to check a lamb, if he had baa’d in his face, was in his brother’s arms before the appeal was finished. He ran to the door, and turning the key, said to the servants, “that he didn’t want them—it didn’t signify,” but when, in answer to some ques-

tions from the inquisitive race, who wished to penetrate more particularly into the nature of the uproar, he was going on—"it was only my brother and I"—Griffith, afraid to trust him further, told them his brother had been threatening a vagrant at the window," and again shutting the door, resumed his speculations with more calmness, but not with less conviction of their ultimate success.

It was not, however, without another contest, occasioned by a repeated misapprehension of the terms employed in communicating the mighty hopes of the one party to the other, that Caleb was in full possession of Griffith's meaning and purpose. He was no sooner acquainted with it, than he began to suspect that Griffith was more seriously mad, than even at the moment of the extraordinary ebullitions which had previously displayed themselves. In any thing connected with business, Caleb was at home, and having at length obtained a hearing, endeavoured to prove—what was certainly true—that the Owens of Penp-twphwly, which he pronounced (and it may well astonish the reader) with perfect facility, had branched off from the Cwm Owen Owens, somewhere about the reign of Elizabeth, and that the lady who had been transplanted from that stock, even could a nearer connexion have been traced, was only grafted on the Oldsworths, and could not possibly afford any title or shadow of claim to the Owens.

All that Caleb obtained in return for this very rational explanation—which exhibited his talents in the most favourable point of view—was a denunciation against matter-of-fact, straight-forward people in general, and Caleb in particular, followed by the retreat of the offended party to his own room, with the folio (so often referred to in this history) under his arm, and a declaration, upon oath, of the validity of his claim upon the property with the unpronounceable name!

Whether, after two days' seclusion, he was satisfied that Caleb was right, or whether in turning his eye round the apartment in vacancy, his imagination had caught some new impression, I do not take upon me to say. At the end of that period, the folio was found open upon the table of his dressing-room, and the servant announced at breakfast, that Mr Griffith Owen had walked off to Bristol at six o'clock in the morning.

In a few days afterwards, Sir Luke, with the approbation of Caleb and Mapletoft, dispatched his letter to the heir at law.

Pen passed his time agreeably enough to himself, and with perfect satisfaction to his uncle, who thought his education, which had cost so much labour, exercise, and expense, was of course now at an end. Nothing, he conceived was further necessary, than to reap and enjoy the fruits of it. He did not,

indeed, attempt to estimate the nature and quality of his acquisitions, independent of their cost ; and the reader may reasonably entertain a doubt, whether they were such as might be deemed sufficient to ballast the mind of a very volatile young man of eighteen. It is, however, but justice to say, that setting aside those considerations which combined to satisfy uncle Caleb that his education was necessarily completed, Pen Owen was rather an extraordinary sort of person ; for taking into our calculation all that had hitherto been done to overset and bewilder his mind, it is marvellous that he should have been able to walk into a drawing-room without alarming the company—and still more so, that he should be received with smiles and affection by every individual who composed it.

Yet so it was—and, in truth, he was a lad of considerable natural powers, though certainly—no genius. The strange want of system, in which his father—under a succession of changeful and heterogeneous schemes, changeful as the wind, or what is still more variable, the fancies of a projector—had given a sort of wildness to his fancy, whilst it afforded little check to his passions. Severe discipline at one fit, and a total relaxation at another ;—deep and intense application enforced for a month, and listless idleness in the next—had afforded any thing and every thing but what a wise man looks to, as the object of a regular education. Nevertheless, as the young man advanced towards manhood, a natural quickness of perception led him to perceive the tortuous irregularity of his father's mind, and to appreciate and admire the amiable tendency of his uncle's mixed character ; and as the one was certainly more attractive than the other, he may be supposed to have extracted something of the better parts of it, during the period of his intercourse with him.

All that was substantially good among the component parts of his education, was derived from his previous studies under Mr Mapletoft ; which being regularly laid, and founded in moral and religious principle, were never altogether dislodged, even by the superincumbent mass of layers, and strata, accumulated in raising the superstructure.

It is not, however, to be supposed, that a youth could escape, altogether harmless from such an ordeal. His character was so far affected by the absence of system or consistency, in the formation of his mind, that he appeared to be the creature of the moment upon all occasions, and the slave of the passion which happened to be in the ascendant when an appeal was made to it. He could fix himself to nothing, and was in the same company, even as a lad, commended by the fox-hunter as the boldest leaper ; by the farmer, as the best judge of manures ;

by the ladies, as the best bred, and by the learned, even, as the best read young man—for twenty miles round.

These were country judges, we must admit; but there was an ease and confidence about him which enabled him to display all that he possessed, aided by the captivation of a very handsome person, and an air to which a continual succession of new characters and new pursuits, had given a sort of animation, that might have imposed upon those, who, in the metropolis itself, set up for supreme judges in all matters that are cognizable to the jurisprudence of mind. In short, he was master of all the materials to form a very self-sufficient, superficial sort of young gentleman; and if he should happen to turn out to be something better than this, it must be attributed to any thing rather than design on the part of his philosophical parent.

Pen Owen had become a great favourite with Sir Luke, who would willingly have adopted him as his heir, could the strict laws of entail have been dispensed with, in favour of his wishes. His animation, and the various qualifications he possessed, appeared to the baronet in a light that deducted much from his share of the general contempt, expressed every where, (except in the presence of neighbour Caleb,) of Griffith Owen's speculations, and in particular his mode of educating his son. He really considered him a very delightful young man, and would have surrendered half his fortune whilst living—to ensure such an heir to the whole after his death.

The habits of the old gentleman had been so confirmed, and his society so limited for several years past, that he almost repented of the step he had been induced to take, in inviting Mr Frank Wettenhall—the young heir at law—to the Grange. He naturally wished to become personally acquainted with his character, of which report spoke most favourably; and felt it also due to the future representative of the Oldysworths, that he should be received and acknowledged in due form; but a new face—new society—and new opinions, gave him no small apprehension, as the period of his arrival approached, and he regretted he had not postponed the invitation to another year. He recollected, however, that he was an old man, and the command of years precarious and uncertain—and made up his mind by degrees to await the event.

CHAPTER XV.

It was on a fine summer's afternoon, when Sir Luke was enjoying an unusual flow of good spirits, surrounded by his friends the Mapletofts, Ellice Craig, Caleb, and Pen Owen, and filling out his first glass after dinner—that the wheels of a carriage were distinctly heard approaching the great entrance of the house.

I do verily believe the intrusion of the best friend we have in the world, would create an unpleasant sensation at the particular moment when we have just made up our resolution to enjoy ourselves upon some regular fixed plan—in which *he* happens never to have occurred to our mind.

Sir Luke started, and spilt the wine as it approached his lips, and the whole company seemed to catch the feeling.

"It must be Mr Wettenhall, Sir Luke," said Mapletoft.

"It's an awkward moment," sighed the baronet.

"It may be—my brother," said Caleb, in a tone intended to convey comfort.

"Perhaps it is," returned Sir Luke, without much altering the tone of expression.

"Mr Francis Wettenhall," proclaimed the butler, throwing open the folding-doors of the dining-parlour, at the same time making way for a fine young man, in an elegant travelling undress, and with a countenance of inexpressible sweetness.

"I fear, Sir Luke,"—the baronet had risen to receive him—"I fear that, owing to a delay I could neither foresee or prevent, I am arrived at a very unseasonable hour."

"Nay," replied the baronet, who had sufficiently recovered himself, and withal was agreeably surprised by the manners and address of the young man—"Nay, my good sir; no hour is unseasonable among friends—and such we are, I hope, or shall be shortly."

"Sir Luke, you do me infinite honour; but really this looks so much like an intrusion"—

"An intrusion!" repeated his host, with a suppressed sigh, "no, no, surely not—we are not so ceremonious in the country—say, my good sir, have you dined?"

"It was my intention to have been in time for your"—

"Say not a word more.—Delves, set a side-table, and order something to be got ready immediately.—Now," turning towards the still standing guests, "allow me to present the future heir"—

Here was a momentary pause—for the exertion which the old

baronet had made, to do what was right, had hurried him on, beyond his real speed, and faltering at the word heir, he rapidly named the several individuals—and filling himself a glass of wine, drank to Mr Wettenhall's health.—That gentleman, after a short pause, looking at his boots, requested, in the most delicate manner, permission to retire to change his travelling dress.

The company, on his departure, sat looking upon each other for a few seconds in silence ; for though none of them had ever been at court, with the exception of the baronet, no one cared to offer an opinion upon the stranger, till some other should give the tone, as it were, to what was to be thought of him—so gregarious a being is man.

"Upon my word," (at length observed the baronet,) "a fine, well-spoken young gentleman."—A general assent was immediately given—and Mr Mapletoft, whose word was law with the majority of his audience, confirmed the observation by speaking of him as modest and well-mannered, as far as he could judge of him. He remarked also, his very prepossessing appearance.

"And very handsome, I declare," added Mrs Mapletoft. "Don't you think so, Ellice, my dear?"

"I'm no judge, madam, but I certainly have seen handsomer ;" which observation she made as general as possible, by looking at every body round the table—excepting our friend Pen.

"He's not so good-looking, for example, as my boy there," said Caleb, smirking and smiling, as he gazed upon him.

The comment was too close upon the text, and Pen, hastening to divert its direction, exclaimed—"Fie, uncle !" and very properly blushed up to the eyes.

"It's a good first appearance," observed the baronet, who now seemed disposed to banish, as much as possible, all that had been disagreeable in the affair, and to take the sunny side—"rather trying, before so many strangers."

"A better than I should have made," cried Pen, "though"——

"Though you are an impudent fellow, Pen," retorted Caleb, whose consequence in the family had almost induced a disposition to be witty.

"Though you are pleased to say so, sir—but really and truly, I do not know a more embarrassing situation : indeed I should say it required some brass"——

"Brass !" cried Caleb, "yes, yes, enough of that ; but I hope," smiling at the baronet—"it will be long enough before he touches it."

"Nay, Pen," cried Mr Mapletoft, with something like an air of rebuke, "that's not quite fair."

"On my soul, sir !"

"Your soul, Pen !"

"My *déar* sir, you embarrass me.—I mean to say, that though my dear uncle would call, and has called me often, an impudent fellow, I could no more have summoned brass enough to"—

"I really am surprised, my good boy," interrupted the vicar, "that you should express such a sentiment."

"I always must express what I feel."

"Then you will, sir, be guilty of great imprudence."

"I shall be honest, at least; and if I mistake not—be consistent with the principles I have heard you often express."

"I never laid down any principle, sir, that could justify an expression injurious to the character of another."

"Injurious! upon my soul"—

"Your soul again staked!"

"Nay my dear, dear Mr Mapletoft, if you won't let me swear to my innocence"—

"I'd rather have the word of an honest man than his oath, at any time; those who are so lavish of solemn asseverations upon every passing trifle, show the value they set upon them, by bestowing them thus liberally."

"If I must not swear to it, then, I most seriously declare, I meant nothing more than"—when the door opening, the object of the discussion re-entered and sat down at the side-table, leaving the company to find some other topic for conversation.

After several very interesting details on parish business, and the local politics of Oldysleigh, which, the reader may be disposed to agree with me, are as well omitted altogether, the attention of the company was attracted by a curricule, which rapidly passing by an angle of the park paling, within view of the window, seemed to be carried along in a cloud of dust: "Who is that?" asked Ellice Craig.

"Black Jack, I believe," answered Pen.

"Who?" demanded the baronet.

"Major Irwin, sir," replied our hero, "whom the villagers have honoured with this nickname."

"I know nothing of him," said Sir Luke, rather with a mortified air: "he may be black or white for aught I care—but of this I am sure, he is not a well-bred man."

"He is an odd one, certainly," observed Mrs Mapletoft; "he has acted towards the whole neighbourhood with the same neglect."

"Of course, madam," said Sir Luke, with a prouder air, than he now often assumed, "he would not single *me* out for his incivility."

"I rather think," said the vicar, "we have all decided too hastily upon this man's conduct. He returned our visits, but declines all society. He appears to be a man of retired habits."

"Very retired indeed," said Mrs Mapletoft, with an air which showed that she considered herself as the mistress of the ceremonies within the precincts of the parish, where existed no rival lady paramount.

"He's a nabob," observed Pen; "and they say such men sometimes have—bad nights."

"Again, Pen! have you no charity for your neighbours?"

"Fie, Pen," smiled Caleb, "that's just the same as the brass"——

"No, no, no, Mr Owen," interrupted Mapletoft—"it is like something worse."

"Oh!" cried Caleb, perceiving his mistake, "I quite forgot"——

"No you didn't, dear good uncle Caleb," interrupted Ellice Craig—closing her little white hand upon his mouth, which he kissing—really forgot what he was going to say.

"I assure you, sir," said Pen, immediately taking up the conversation, "I meant to insinuate nothing against the poor gentleman, only nabobs and lawyers are always considered fair game for us—small wits."

"No, I'm sure he meant no harm," observed Caleb, "either against the Black Major, or"——

"Or the lawyer," said poor Mapletoft, in a loud tone of voice, in order to arrest the blundering explanations of Caleb. But in avoiding Sylla, the good vicar fell into Charybdis, without even perceiving the eddy; for, repeating again the word lawyer, with a sort of facetious smile, and a nod to give it more significance, he was not aware that young Wettenhall, having left the side-table, and advanced towards the company, stood exactly in front of the speaker, whose features had scarcely relaxed into their wonted expression, when he requested, with an air of frank modesty, "that he might not stand in the way of a joke—even at his own expense."

"Sir—sir, at *your* expense?" cried Mapletoft, who in his extreme sensitiveness mistook the application of Wettenhall's words, and floundering deeper in his own error, intended to make a desperate plunge out of it, by adding, "a lawyer—only a lawyer, sir, who is generally supposed, you know, to be a bit of a rogue."

"I am perfectly aware of it, and I only regret that you should appear to feel, what I really do not feel for myself."

"For yourself, sir," exclaimed the tortured Mapletoft.

"Yes, sir; for if a concurrence of circumstances—which no man can more deeply lament than I do—had not interfered with my original destination in life—I should have been a lawyer myself."

Mapletoft was relieved by the explanation, and the whole party sat easier on their seats at finding themselves relieved from the embarrassment into which Caleb's blunder had involved them. Sir Luke good-humouredly observed, that "no man was the worse for having a joke passed on him." Mapletoft added more gravely, "that sometimes the most serious subjects were susceptible of ridicule and ribaldry." Young Wettenhall finding a pause—which none of the company appearing disposed to break, and which was doubly irksome to a stranger—ventured to put an end to it, by asking who the gentleman was that had occasioned the foregoing animadversions.

"He's a new settler, my good sir," answered Sir Luke, "lately returned, we understand, from India. He has converted a cottage, which is within view of the drawing-room windows, into a sort of cockney or eastern villa—a thing made up of verandas and fretwork, that a stranger might mistake for an aviary, or a whigwham. Whether he is indisposed to society, or, as my young friend Pen Owen suspects"—

"Not I, upon my soul, sir!" interrupted Pen, "I know nothing of him."

"Well, then, whether as small wits," continued Sir Luke good-humouredly, "imagine, that being a nabob, his conscience is too sensitive for society or not, I cannot take upon me to determine; all I know is, that he has hitherto declined mine, and as I now find, the acquaintance of the neighbourhood. Why he is called Black Jack, by the small wits—hey Pen?—I do not pretend to know."

"I understand you, my good sir," said Pen.

"Yes; but I don't understand the wit."

"The wit I must leave others to discover," retorted Pen; "but the occasion is perfectly intelligible, for the poor man is very plain in his countenance, and a tropical climate has baked it into a sort of brown pie-crust."

"There may be good meat under it," said Mapletoft, smiling.

"But he won't let us cut it open," added Pen, laughing at his own conceit.

"Cut open what?" enquired Caleb.

"Nothing, my good uncle," replied his nephew, dreading some new explosion; when perceiving him about to persevere, Sir Luke very opportunely broke in upon the subject, by asking young Wettenhall, what news he brought with him from town.

"I am," answered the young man, "so little of a politician, beyond the general feeling of attachment to my country, and am so slightly acquainted with what is going forward in the great world, that I fear I am seldom a welcome guest in the country."

"You are, here, I promise you, Mr Francis Wettenhall," observed the baronet, filling his new guest's glass, "and it isn't your not being a politician that's likely to stand in your way with us—it is one bone of contention removed."

"Your time has rather been devoted to books, I presume?" said Mr Mapletoft, addressing the young man.

"Indeed, sir, I find my chief resource in them—and in the society of my superiors."

"You speak modestly, sir—you mean learned society?"

"I fear I should be out of my element there.—No, sir, I speak of those, in general, whose experience and information upon various subjects, amuse, while they enlighten my mind."

"You have some favourite pursuit I conclude, sir."

"Indeed I should be puzzled to say what it is."

"The classics, perhaps?"

"They are a fascinating study, sir."

"The sciences?" asked Pen.

"I have but a superficial acquaintance with them."

"I have forgotten, Mr Wettenhall," said the baronet, "whether your good father mentioned in his last letter your having been educated at a public school."

"I had not that good fortune, Sir Luke."

"Good fortune!—you seem to have done very well without it."

"You were at Oxford, I think, sir?" said Mapletoft.

"I am a Cantab."

"A what, sir?" asked Caleb.

"Mr Wettenhall was of Cambridge," answered Mapletoft, in a half whisper.

Sir Luke now expressed a hope that Mr Wettenhall would find means of passing his time among them, so as not to regret the waste of it. "There are horses, my dear sir," added he, "whom you will benefit by exercising; and we have many lions in the neighbourhood."

"Lions!" ejaculated Caleb.

"Ay, neighbour Owen, not of the African breed."

"Oh! I dare say—but I was not aware of our having any breed of them at all in this country."

Young Wettenhall, with admirable delicacy, appeared not to observe the smile which Caleb's simplicity had occasioned; but directly expressing his acknowledgment of the baronet's attention, added, "Indeed, Sir Luke, there is more danger of my forgetting how time passes in such a circle, than any probability of its hanging heavy on my hands. I shall, however, cheerfully avail myself of your hospitable offer, in the intervals of more serious occupation."

Here the conversation ended; and, by the time the young

man had made his bow for the evening, it would be difficult to say which of the party was most favourable in the opinions formed of him. It must be confessed, that Ellice Craig said less than some of the commentators; but this, perhaps, was out of delicacy to Pen—and Pen, after having admitted all that was prepossessing in the young heir, only added, that he was rather too refined for him. Some allowance must be made for this apparent indisposition of Pen towards Wettenhall, when his person and expectations, coupled with his future domestication in the house, and close connexion with the family of Ellice Craig, are considered.

With the routine of a family circle—or, what was nearly the same, the union of the three families at Oldysleigh—a writer of history has little to do, unless, like some minute historians of a former day, he were to occupy himself and his readers with the description of the several *toilettes*, by way of supplement, and keep a diary, showing how the appetites of each of the party, severally, were affected by the changes of the weather, or the arrival of the post. I would not, however, wish to appear a niggard of my labours in the service of the public, and to show that I do actually possess matter, as well as the ability, if it were still in fashion, to be as tedious as my predecessors, I can solemnly assure my readers, that, for several weeks, the wind continued in the north-west with slight breezes, and uninterrupted fine weather; and that during the same period only three letters arrived—such wretched correspondents were our friends—at Oldysleigh, two of which were to the new-comer, and the third to Caleb—informing him that his brother Griffith had drawn upon him for a good round sum, and was actually in Paris—having made his way through the Netherlands—for the purpose of uniting with an enlightened member of the Institute—in extracting sugar from old linen!!*

Mr Frank Wettenhall gained ground every day in the good graces of the party at Oldysleigh. Sir Luke really felt proud of him, and made him the constant companion of his rides and walks. He was anxious to give every publicity to the attachment, and, from a sort of pride which revolted at the notion of having an heir thrust upon him, lost no opportunity of showing that he was one, whom he would have chosen out of ten thousand.

Whether there is a disposition to jealousy even in the most liberal minds at the idea of another assuming a right of sharing a privilege which we consider all our own, or whether it was

* The Journals of Europe have noticed our philosophical friend, though without naming him, as appears by the following extract, from the newspapers of the 18th and 19th of February 1820 :—“It is asserted, in letters from Paris, that a celebrated chemist has found out a method of converting rags into sugar!!!”

from a less justifiable motive, I do not take upon me to say ; but it is a fact, which occasioned much comment, that Pen Owen appeared rather to recede from the attentions paid to him by Wettenhall, and that he constantly declined accompanying Sir Luke, as he had been wont to do, if that gentleman was of the party. It is natural that I should feel anxious to acquit a man, whom I am bound in duty to support as the hero of my history, of any mean or petty feelings ; but I scorn to be guilty of a sophistry which might injure the morals of my readers, without doing any essential benefit to the child of my adoption.

One palliative circumstance, may, however, be pressed into the service, and as a lover's jealousy is of a very different quality from that of a worldling, it must be confessed that the fine animating black eyes and ingenuous character of Ellice Craig, certainly did appear to have attracted the attention of the young heir, in a manner sufficient, all circumstances considered, to give some uneasiness to poor Pen Owen. This, indeed, in a few weeks more, began to be generally observed by the parties most interested in the question, and the introduction of a man whose amiable manners and personal appearance spoke highly in his favour, seemed by his arrival in this little district of peace, to have unconsciously thrown down the apple of discord.

Sir Luke, though not a very observant man, soon perceived the partiality of the young squire for the orphan, which involved him in a train of reflections, to solve which he had not the aid of the privy councillors who for many years had assisted to determine his plans, and fix his resolutions. He considered Ellice Craig, indeed, almost as a daughter ; but he still retained too much of his family pride, to entertain, for a moment, the idea of suffering the heir of the Oldysworths, to unite himself with an orphan, without connexions, and probably of illegitimate birth ; for it was more than insinuated that she was a natural daughter of Mrs Mapletoft's first husband, previous to his marriage with her. A thousand contending feelings were awakened in his breast, which for years had lain dormant in it. All the associations connected with the fate of his younger son arose to his recollection vivid as at the moment of their occurrence ; the lengthened chain of suffering, now almost obscured by time and habitual resignation, was taken up link by link, and the recurrence of circumstances so similar, startled and alarmed him. The suspicion that the Mapletofts were desirous of providing for their orphan child, prevented his seeking their counsel ; and Caleb Owen's ignorance of the world, and simplicity of character, precluded him from being thought of as an adviser. The worthy baronet, therefore, was in a situation, to a mind for

many years calm and unruffled by external circumstances, and mainly directed by the affectionate influence of friends—truly pitiable. He was as a child afloat upon the waves, without the knowledge or means of safety or protection.

The Mapletots, though flattered by the attentions of the heir presumptive to their beloved child, had acted as much as possible on the reserve, being resolved to afford no encouragement to his evident passion, unless sanctioned by the baronet, whose objection on the score of family connexions, however, they had never anticipated. They had perfect confidence in a reform, which—such alas is the weakness of our nature—was sincere and steady too, until encountered by his ruling passion, that seldom, if ever, is wholly eradicated from the human breast.

But the most unhappy of the party (with the exception of Pen himself) was Ellice Craig, who, feeling the advantages possessed by her now professed admirer, and knowing the influence of riches, dreaded alike the solicitude of her foster-parents for her welfare, and the avowed determination of the baronet to make every sacrifice to the happiness of his cherished representative. It must be remarked, however, that this determination was expressed before the baronet was aware that any sacrifice would be required. In the mean time, whilst each party was irresolute how to act, the principal actor was at liberty to forward his own views, and as no one was authorized to interfere, young Wetenhall enjoyed uninterrupted opportunities of cultivating the society of the lovely Ellice.

Pen Owen, who had not from nature or education derived any great power of control over his feelings, was no longer able to submit himself to the timid counsels of Ellice, although she had hitherto restrained him, by an assurance of never being the wife of any but himself. Like all those persons who act from passion, rather than reason, he did not stop to reflect upon the best mode of throwing off his reserve, and avowing his sentiments which he now thought it disgraceful to conceal.

One morning, when Ellice had been taking a solitary stroll in one of the park woods, she perceived, upon emerging from it, a noble buck tossing his antlers, in all the graces of well assured beauty, just in front of her path. Accustomed to the sight of these animals from her infancy, she felt little alarm, and waving her handkerchief at him, tried to motion him away; but instead of obeying her gentle admonition, he appeared to take it very much amiss, and rapidly tearing up the earth with his elegantly formed hoofs—as if still studying the graces—she quickly perceived that he was studying something of a less gallant nature, and turning quickly upon her heel, made a dart at a gate which was a small distance behind her, over which she would

have fallen, had not the open arms of the agitated Wettenhall been prepared to receive her.

Pen, who from an opposite direction perceived her danger, had sped like an arrow from a bow to her aid, just saw her disappear over the gate, which he leapt in an instant, and found her smiling, in the close embrace of his rival.

Now, as poor Pen's conduct is to be severely arraigned upon the occasion, as has already been anticipated, yet the smile of Ellice Craig ought to be taken into the opposite scale, of provocation, for though this smile might have been intended for the approaching, as well as the proximate lover, nevertheless the actual display of that token, which is acknowledged throughout the world as the test of satisfaction, at a moment when her fair form was encircled by the arms of another, must be admitted to be rather calculated to irritate a lover, who considered no one entitled to have his arm so placed, except himself. Besides, those arms were positively opened for the purpose, as he gracefully leapt the gate.

Without, however, attempting to justify his imprudence, we may pity him for the impulse which prompted him to snatch the prize out of the clutches of him who had first made it; but what shall we say—when, pushing off his rival with the other hand, he in a menacing tone demanded, "By what right Mr Wettenhall had presumed to aid the lady."

A flush of indignation appeared to heighten the expression of his rival's fine features, which, however, subsiding as quickly, he replied "That humanity alone, would, he hoped, appear a sufficient justification, independently of the interest he must naturally take in every thing that concerned Miss Craig."

"And what the devil right or interest have you, sir, in Miss Craig?" exclaimed the hero.

"That, my dear sir," mildly answered Wettenhall, "must rather depend upon Miss Craig herself, than either upon you or myself."

"Then, sir, I will speak for Miss Craig"—

"Nay, nay, my dear Pen—be advised—be calm," exclaimed the agitated girl, interrupting him.

"Peace, peace, my angel!" cried Pen. "Now is the moment for."—

What he would have said, it is not in our power to record; for at this moment a gentleman, with a gun in his hand, made his *entré* over the same gate; not, indeed, with the grace of Pen, but with sufficient agility to startle the party, to whom he appeared to have dropped from the clouds. If there had been time for critical examination, they might perhaps have concluded that he had rather risen than dropt, since his appearance was any

thing certainly but angelic. He was a man of the middling size, and, as far as figure was concerned, of a manly and well-proportioned make; but his face had, at least at the present moment, an expression in it, which, although evidently intended for a smile, sat awkwardly upon a set of nondescript features, to which such a mood seemed to be the invasion of a stranger. His eyes were dark and penetrating; his nose nearly flattened on his face, either by nature in a perverse mood, or by art in a mischievous one, and his complexion—to use Pen's illustration—somewhat like an ill-baked pie crust; for he was no other than Black Jack, or, in more proper terms, Major Irwin, who had been the subject of a recent discussion in Sir Luke's dining parlour.

When this gentleman, however, explained the object of his intrusion, which was no other than the identical floating muslin flag of distress, which had attracted her two other knights to the gate; and when, in a silver-toned voice, as little in character with his external appearance as the smile already recorded, he had expressed what he felt on perceiving the lady's danger—Black Jack certainly appeared less black, or rather, I should say, not black at all, to those of the party who were sufficiently disengaged from their own feelings, to bestow a thought upon the intruder, after the first surprise of his appearance was over. Ellice Craig, however, found words, in a tone not inferior to his own, though perhaps an octave or two higher, to express her sense of the kindness and interest he had shown in her danger. Young Wettenhall, too, felt called upon to say something, as Pen stood sullen, like an angry lion guarding his prey from an intruder. "I am sure, sir," said he, addressing the major, "the friends of this young lady will feel most grateful for the interest"—

"Are you, sir," fiercely demanded Pen, "the representative of Mr and Mrs Mapletoft?"

"Pray, pray, my dear Pen," cried Ellice.

"Indeed, sir," replied Wettenhall, addressing Pen, "you appear to misconceive my motives, and"—

"I *know* your motives, sir."

"Then I am sure your candour will give a fair interpretation to my conduct. Mr and Mrs Mapletoft are equally your friends and mine; and had you preferred to express what you, sir, equally with myself, know they must feel upon such an occasion, I should not have presumed officiously to interpose a word. I felt something was due to this gentleman," looking up to the major, who, by the direction and expression of his eyes, appeared just ready to enter the lists as a third pretender to the prize.

"Indeed, sir," answered the major, "the attraction of the ob-

ject is sufficient to deprive any exertion in its favour, of the character of merit, even had I"—

"Merit! no, surely," replied Wettenhall, with more passion than he had exhibited before, "there is little merit in obeying the finest impulses of our nature."

"Impulses, sir!" exclaimed Pen; "and what business"—

"Indeed," said Ellice, disengaging herself from his arms, "indeed, Mr Owen, you are wrong;" and, turning with a most bewitching smile towards the major, expressed to him her thankfulness for the solicitude he had evinced, curtsied to the other gentleman, and was withdrawing alone, when Pen, seizing her arm, placed it within his own, and turning a haughty look of defiance upon his rival, marched off the field, like another Alexander, after he had decided the fate of an empire.

Young Wettenhall appeared shocked, and for a moment uncertain how to act; but restraining his feelings, he walked on in the opposite direction, preceded by the major, who had left the party, in whose politics, whatever he might think of them, he had evidently no inclination to take a share. Not proceeding so fast as Wettenhall, he was soon overtaken by that gentleman, and good-breeding on either side demanded that something should be said, as long as they remained in a track through the wood, which admitted of no turning to the right hand or the left.

"A fine young woman, Miss Mapletoft, sir," observed the major.

"An angel, sir," replied the young man; "but not Miss Mapletoft"—

"Not Miss Mapletoft!—I thought you spoke of her as a daughter of"—

"The adopted daughter, sir," answered Wettenhall.

"The adopted daughter?"

"Yes—an orphan, or some distant connexion. I am not acquainted with her history."

"You seem, sir," said the major, with a peculiar sort of expression, "not to be uninterested in her fate."

Wettenhall blushed.

"She is poor, I conclude," added the major. "Her friends cannot be rich. It would be a meritorious act," he continued, "if her mind be equal to her exterior form, to raise her to a situation in which"—

"It might, certainly," answered the young man.

"You are that man, sir," said the major, very emphatically, "if I am not mistaken in supposing you the heir of Sir Luke Oldysworth."

"This is a singular observation, sir."

"Is it not a just one?"

"I have never considered it, sir."

"Then why have you paid attentions to that sweet girl, without having fully made up your mind upon the subject?"

"I must confess, sir," replied Wettenhall, "whatever may be my respect for a stranger; for such—although I am aware I am addressing Major Irwin—you are still to me, I cannot submit to interrogatories."

"Interrogatories, sir!—would you not answer me, if I demanded whether the sun shone at noon-day, or whether you had a head upon your shoulders?"

Wettenhall, who now concluded his companion's retired life to proceed from a cracked brain, smilingly answered, "Surely I should, sir, without much hesitation."

"Then why, sir, let me ask, should you resent an interrogatory put to you, upon a subject just as plain and self-evident, if it were in your power to answer it as explicitly?"

"Were I disposed to discuss such a question, sir, I might say it was not quite so self-evident that"——

"That the peace and happiness of an amiable girl might be involved and sacrificed, before you had decided whether it was in your power to redeem them."

"I said no such thing, sir."

"That's what I complain of"——

"That I do not acknowledge myself a villain, sir?"

"That you have not decided the important question, whether you are, or are not."

"Upon my word, sir, I can neither submit, whatever may be my opinion of your misfortunes"——

"Misfortunes!"

"I mean, sir, whatever may be my disposition to pass over what is already said, I neither can nor will submit to be catechised, not only by an authority which has no cognizance of my actions, but by one who is ignorant either of my character or my views in life."

"Not quite so much as you may suppose, young man—my eye searches deeper than you are aware"—and so saying, the parties separated at right angles, at the first opening of the wood, to all appearance equally unsatisfied with each other.

It must be admitted, that the black major has not done much, upon his first introduction to our readers, to warrant a very high opinion either of his penetration or his civility; for it would have appeared to any ordinary eye, that Pen was the most proper object of a lecture on the passions, and that the temperate deportment of his rival, under very trying circumstances, was rather a ground for admiration than a topic of animadversion.

It is evident, therefore, that Black Jack, as he was called, was at least an odd-tempered man, and that his neighbours had, apparently, no great loss in his seclusion from their society.

Fame has as many ears as mouths; and though only four persons were entrusted with the events of this morning, scarcely an individual in the parish was ignorant of it by the evening. It is true there had been some dislocation in the details, which, having to pass from ear to mouth in so many instances, may be naturally supposed to have undergone some transmutatory process; and the oftener the account was repeated, the greater would probably be the variation.

Poor uncle Caleb was *confidentially* informed that his nephew had horsewhipped young Wettenhall, and run away with Ellice Craig—the Mapletofts were assured that young Wettenhall had rescued Ellice from the arms of Black Jack, who was carrying her off, Heaven knows where—whilst the poor baronet was horrified by a communication from his man Delves, that Mr Wettenhall was reported to have been severely wounded in a duel with Major Irwin.

If it be asked how these delusions could operate for any time upon the several parties concerned, it will turn out to have arisen from those strange coincidences, which appear marvellous till they are traced to their very natural, and sometimes very ordinary sources. In the first place, then, it had been customary, for many years past, for the three families to spend part of every evening, if not assembled at dinner, at the house of one or other of them. On the day in question, the meeting was to take place at the vicarage, where several of the neighbours, not of consequence enough to find a place in our society, were also invited. Pen had dined with his uncle, and, of course, said nothing about the adventure—Wettenhall with the baronet, and Ellice Craig at home, neither of whom felt any disposition to communicate the events of the morning. When the families were assembled in the drawing-room of the vicarage, none of the three aforesaid individuals, so essential to our history, were present, which was the more remarkable, as such a circumstance had never been known to occur before.

The stranger guests arrived, full primed with the reports in circulation; and perceiving this *hiatus* in the usual circle, began first to whisper their suspicions, till gradually amalgamating with the parties more immediately interested, several little groups were formed; and whilst one approached the ear of the hostess, another took the button of the baronet, and a third, not being aware of the touchwood he was about to fire, opened upon poor Caleb. Having been made acquainted with this edition of the report prepared for him, he began capering about the room

like a madman, and was quickly joined, if not by a chorus worthy of the leader, at least of sufficient strength to set the whole society in commotion. It will be recollected that the hasty and simultaneous communications were made without any reference to dates, which would have undone the effect of them in a great measure, whilst a quiet comparison of notes would have gone far to overthrow them altogether, since the circumstances varied in their application to each of the individuals, to whom the several reports referred.

The Mapletofts, who had not been informed of the danger of their child until her rescue was effected, had only to seek her in her chamber, in order wholly to relieve their minds; but Caleb arrested them in their advance towards the door, roaring out that it was in vain to search for Ellice, for that she was gone off; whilst the baronet, whose native violence seemed to have found a new birth, absolutely collared Caleb in the midst of his agony, swearing, that if there was law in England, that villain Pen Owen should hang upon the highest tree in it.

Here was confusion doubly confounded; for new matter and new horrors seemed to burst at every moment upon the conflicting passions of the parties embroiled. It was most happy for all concerned that some indifferent spectators were present, to act as wool-packs or feather-beds, between the fire of the several friends, thus momentarily converted into enemies.

The baronet was forcibly separated from Caleb, whose wrath was not likely to be quelled by the rough handling of the baronet. He retorted Sir Luke's insult, which, nevertheless, he did not understand, by applauding his boy for horsewhipping the heir; whilst Mapletoft interfering, as being the only temperate, though not the least anxious, man of the party, entreated an explanation of the words, which had been uttered, in the first ebullition of his wrath.

"Explain! explain! Mr Mapletoft. Are you not ashamed," exclaimed the spluttering Caleb, "to have inveigled my poor dear boy into a runaway match, with your—your"—

"My what, sir?" demanded the vicar, sternly.

"Confound her!—Heaven forgive me—I don't know what to call her—oh dear! what will become of me—she's an angel too."

"I will hunt the fellow down," roared the struggling baronet.

"Unhand me, gentlemen, I will see justice done."

"Leave him alone—body o' me, I fear no baronet," exclaimed Caleb; "the blood of the Owens"—

Just to interrupt the exposure of our good friend's weak point—which lay buried under so much humility—the door opened, and the two young men entered the room!

Who has ever seen the effect of the pedagogue's march into school,

when the joint efforts of three or four hundred boys, to produce as much uproar as can possibly be extracted from lusty, young, and vigorous lungs, are suddenly suspended?—who, that, after a furious canonnade, has experienced that strange sensation of numbness which seems to suspend the faculties; or, above every thing else—for *he* is my man—who has ever seen—a *GHOST!*—*HE*, and *HE only*, can truly picture to himself the impression made upon the beholders, by the sudden vision of the two young men!

After a pause of some seconds, during the first apparition of these two spirits (for their identity was doubted by more than one of the party,) they did not, as in duty bound by every law and precedent in necromancy, wait to be questioned; but with a look of astonishment demanded an explanation of the scene before them. After a few questions, and a little cross-examination of witnesses, the whole indignation of the now reunited families, was turned upon the intrusive talebearers, who, with one voice, were declared unworthy of the sitting, and departed by an unanimous decree.

The last departing gossip, whose *Paduasoy*, or *Gros de Naples*, had rustled from one side to the other, as expressive of the dignity of the offended weaver, (being no other than the lawyer's lady,) had nearly vanished, when turning exultingly round, scarcely articulate with rage, she prophetically screamed, "Ye haven't produced Miss Craig yet, good Mistress—Ma—ple—toft."

She was scarcely attended to, in the profusion of regrets expressed for hasty expressions—of kind hugs—renewed oaths of fidelity—and that vast tide of affectionate feelings, which in its reflux overbears those who, from whatever cause, have been hurried into action, against old prejudices, or taken occasion, to quarrel with old friends.

Then—as there is an analogy in all the works of nature—comes a calm, almost a stagnation, the due equilibrium being restored; in society, it is the duty, as it is the impulse of every good-natured being, to make a little stir, in order to get matters to flow again. So thought that very good-natured being, Mrs Mapletoft, who, after animadverting upon the ridiculous manner, in which the banished gossips had fabricated a story, out of such flimsy materials, (for the young men had explained the transaction of the morning in their own way,) just recollected the strange speech of Mrs Quitam on leaving the room.

"Foolish woman," said she, taking up her candle and proceeding to satisfy herself however, that Ellice was in her own chamber, towards which she directed her steps faster, than she had at first intended. Whether this arose from reflecting upon the singular circumstance of her protracted absence, or whether there really be such a quality in the mind, as presentiment, I

cannot tell ; but when she entered the room—no Ellice was to be found !

She was disposed to scream, but thought better of it, as Ellice Craig might exist in other places, besides her chamber ; yet with rather more speed than she ascended, she ran down stairs, and with rather less composure than she had left the room, she returned to it. Smiling through her fears, which she would not acknowledge to herself, she merely said, "Ellice is not up stairs," and requested the young men just to look for her in the garden, and bring her in.

Pen and Wattenhall jostled each other out of the room, for they were equally quick at reading countenances ; and poor Mrs Mapletoft had squatted on the carpet, not exactly perceiving that there was some imperfection in her eyesight at the moment, which had induced her to believe she had a chair under her. The alarm was communicated to the more quick-sighted—that is, her husband and the baronet, who hurried her to the sofa, and immediately left the room. "Stop, stop, my good friends," said Caleb, "here's a remedy," applying a bottle of salts he had taken from the table, to the nostrils of the almost fainting lady. Her sufferings he attributed solely to the accident. This good man was always active when his benevolence was excited. He was on his knees before her, holding her wrist in his hand, because he had associated the idea of remedy, with this incipient proceeding of a medical man. Perceiving that she had not fainted, he with the most benevolent look and in the mildest tone, asked—

"Was it directly on the bone?" adding, "It's an ugly accidently, sometimes."

Poor Mrs Mapletoft, who was thinking of more serious evils, heard not his question, but sighed out, "Gone !"

"That can't be surely madam," cried Caleb, getting on his legs.

"Lost !—torn from me !" exclaimed the now weeping lady.

"The thing's impossible," said Caleb, looking upon the carpet however, as if not quite sure of his assertion.

At this moment the reconnoitring party returned, and with dismay in their looks declared, that Ellice Craig was no where to be found.

Mrs Mapletoft was carried in a state of insensibility to her bed-room, by her scarcely less suffering husband. Caleb perfectly comprehended what had happened, when put into the form of words, and followed his nephew, raving against he knew not whom. The servants of all the three establishments were sent forward in every direction, to discover, if possible, the lost sheep. In vain—not a trace could be found, not a clue discovered ; and

at four o'clock in the morning, the scouring parties were all reassembled at the vicarage, with faces of horror and disappointment.

Young Wettenhall declared his determination to explore every inch of the road to Glo'ster; and Pen—in a fever of agony—broke from his weeping uncle, and mounting his horse, took the opposite direction towards Bristol. The baronet was unable to adopt active measures in person; but Caleb vowed to make the home circuit with Mapletoft, and by daybreak they were pursuing their active researches into every by-place and corner of the parish. Even the forbidden ground of Major Irwin was unceremoniously invaded; but when that gentleman was informed of the cause—he received Mr Mapletoft with every mark of sympathy and esteem—repeated the scene which had occurred the preceding day, and if there was any thing to condemn in the manner of his communication, it certainly was an evident disposition—to throw suspicion upon young Wettenhall.

This, however, was lost upon the ingenuous Mapletoft, who, as he swept it away from his mind, as the error of a misanthropic disposition, proceeded from cottage to cottage, and hunted the very bushes—calling, ever and anon, upon his beloved child Ellice!

Hours flew—days multiplied, and even a week passed—without tidings of any of the absentees. The young men returned not—wrote not; one only report reached them at the end of that period, attested by a gentleman of the neighbourhood—who returning from Marlborough to Bath, three days after that on which Ellice Craig was amissing—insisted upon it, “if ever he had seen Mr Pen Owen in his life, he had passed him in a carriage with a lady—hurrying on, as fast as four horses could carry them—towards London.”—This appeared to be highly improbable, and might be altogether a mistake; but we cannot take upon us to say any thing upon so delicate a question, which goes to the full extent of involving the character of one—in whom we are necessarily most deeply interested.

CHAPTER XVI.

At the conclusion of our former chapter, we left the hitherto peaceful inhabitants of Oldysleigh in a state of suspense and anxiety truly pitiable, and we have little doubt that our readers

are nearly as desirous to learn the fate of poor Ellice Craig, as those who were dispatching messengers in all directions, and offering rewards of all dimensions, for the purpose of recovering her. But, alas ! a paramount sense of duty forbids me to afford such information even as I am myself possessed of, which is, indeed, only what I have collected by peeping, against all order and compact, into the notes furnished me by the gossips of the neighbourhood ; and as we have already seen how little reliance we can have upon such evidence, it is as well, perhaps, to profit by the quiet good sense of Caleb Owen, and to pursue our jog-trot over the high-road, beaten by those who have before us been engaged in this line of business.

In order, however, that we may not be charged with keeping the feelings of those whom we are so disposed to please in too high and tense a state of excitation, it may be right to state, that within a fortnight after the disappearance of Ellice Craig, a letter was received by Mrs Mapletoft, in an unknown hand, assuring her that the young lady was perfectly safe, and under the protection of one who was most deeply interested in her fate ; that, for the present, circumstances precluded her from writing herself ; but that, probably in a short time, the mystery which hung over her flight would be explained to the satisfaction of all parties : then, and not till then, she would be permitted herself to enter upon the subject. The letter bore the post-mark of York, and was without date or signature. The Mapletofts were compelled to be satisfied with this communication, which might, indeed, have afforded some consolation had Ellice herself been permitted to write. As it was, conjecture was more busy, by having more to feed upon ; and if it be true, as is most solemnly urged upon all appropriate occasions, that no news is good news, this glimmer through the shade subtracted from the hopes which utter ignorance might have cherished. Caleb Owen, indeed, with a shrewdness which nothing but the anxiety which he so strongly shared with his neighbours could have sharpened to such a point, ventured to suggest the possibility of the elopement being part of some speculation of his brother Griffith's brain ; a suspicion, however, that soon left a lurking-place which had not been accustomed to such a guest, for a blush upon the good man's cheek had hastily discarded it, even before he had opened a letter received by the same post, where he found a bill to a considerable amount, drawn upon him by the guiltless Griffith, in favour of a Paris banker !

The ice, indeed, seemed broken, and an epistle expressive of grief and disappointment, from Mr Frank Wettenhall, who was now in London, was succeeded by one as full of rage and vows of vengeance on the part of Pen Owen, who, attracted to the

same focus, had, in imitation of his father, speculated upon Caleb's purse, and drew deeply, in order, as he asserted, to carry on his present enquiries with spirit. He had neither time nor calmness to enter into details; he was on the wing, for to remain stationary in the present state of his mind was impossible; and he might traverse half the world before he again saw his "dear uncle."

"Madness!" exclaimed Caleb; "where can the boy be going?" His brother Griffith, had he been present, would probably have afforded Caleb, by actual mensuration, some scale by which to judge of the hemisphere; but although not defined to his mind's eye, he recollected that traversing half the world must occupy a considerable portion of time and money. He repeated the ejaculation of "madness!" under which he mentally classed all resolutions which were not immediately within the grasp of his comprehension; but he never doubted the necessity of honouring his bills, as a matter of business, though it must be confessed he was rather staggered at their amount. It must not, however, be supposed that our good friend Caleb was parsimonious; he had, indeed, certain notions respecting money, which were circumscribed by certain notions respecting happiness, and had nearly withdrawn himself from business at Bristol, because he considered that he had amassed sufficient to supply a competency to himself, and, as he naturally inferred, to his nephew, whom he intended to make heir to the whole of it. There is, however, no question perhaps upon which men differ more than upon the precise quantum of a competency; and from the liberal manner in which his brother Griffith, who despised money in the truest spirit of philosophy, drew upon his resources, and from the continual reference to the same by his nephew, who was wholly ignorant of the value of it, honest Caleb began to doubt the accuracy of the scale upon which he had made his calculations. He might have been figurative enough, in his prose, to calculate, indeed, the consumption of a candle burning at both ends, but he was so puzzled in collecting his ideas upon the influence of a third power, that he hastily supplied the double drain, opened in London and at Paris, and hurrying off to dispel the mist he had raised, joined the party who now daily assembled at the Grange. He there found Mr Frank Wettenhall, just arrived from London, who appeared shattered and worn by his late exertions, and surrounded by his affectionate friends, who were doubly bound to him by the exertions he had made to alleviate their anxiety. As he had never been able to discover a trace of the object he had been in pursuit of, he could of course afford no substantial ground of comfort. He had, as is usual upon such occasions,

incurred many hazards and hairbreadth escapes from angry travellers whom he had stopped, and indignant slumberers whom he had awakened, at the several inns on the road; but, upon the whole, he had returned in a whole skin, and had nothing sufficiently stimulating in his narrative to awaken much interest in his auditory, under the circumstances in which they were then placed. At another time, for he had a very pleasant way of telling a story, his adventures might have afforded some amusement; but although the reader's mind may be less occupied than even those of our friends at Oldysleigh, it is not my intention to try this experiment upon it.

The conversation, however, branched out; and in the course of it, in retracing events, Mr Wettenhall was asked the occasion of his absence on the fatal evening, and what had brought Pen and himself into the drawing-room together at the same moment. The young man hesitated; but he had rather the appearance of endeavouring to recal particulars, than to evade repeating them. He said he had been induced, by the fineness of the evening, to extend his walk after dinner towards Barton Copse, in the Park.

"That was the spot where the chaise was seen," said Sir Luke, turning to Mapletoft.

"What chaise?" hastily demanded Wettenhall.

"A chaise which Barnes told us he had seen there about eight o'clock."

"And what knew he about the chaise?" asked Wettenhall, with some degree of agitation.

"You seem struck with the circumstance, Mr Wettenhall?" said Mapletoft.

"I am, indeed, sir," answered the young man; "but pray, did Mr Barnes make no enquiries respecting a carriage, at so strange an hour, and in such an unfrequented place?"

"That sort of people," observed Mapletoft, "though they are inquisitive enough in general, are slow in drawing inferences. He remarked it, and passed on to his lodge; and the singularity of these circumstances did not occur till he had set himself down at his own fireside: then he not only reflected, but acted, and ran to the spot."

"And," cried Wettenhall, "he was of course too late."

"He returned," said the baronet, "as wise as he came, nor ever thought again of the matter till the hue and cry was up."

"But—I beg pardon, Mr Wettenhall: you were saying you were yourself at Barton Copse; and, I should suppose, nearly about the same time that Barnes"—

"I saw him, sir."

"Then you must have seen the chaise?"

"That does not exactly follow," replied Wettenhall. "He might have been returning at the time."

"True," said the baronet; "it is a pity you had not been five minutes earlier."

"But," asked Mapletoft, who seemed to have imbibed some strange suspicion, "was Pen Owen with you at the time?"

"He was not, sir."

"Then where did you meet him?"

"I would much rather," said Wettenhall, "I had been prepared for this conversation."

"Prepared!" exclaimed Mapletoft, with no very complacent air.

"I repeat my wish, Mr Mapletoft. I am placed in a situation more embarrassing"——

"Truth, to a mind conscious of rectitude," cried the vicar, rising from his chair, "can never be embarrassing."

"I thought, Mr Mapletoft, that both your principles and your humanity would have suggested an inference."

"Why, Frank," exclaimed the baronet, "what the devil does all this mean?"

"It means, my dear sir," said he, in a calm and collected tone, "that other causes than guilt may occasion embarrassment, and that truth"——

"Can only shame the devil, as I have heard," said Caleb. "So pray out with it; for we may defy him here," looking round him.

"Well, sir," said Wettenhall, turning to Mr Mapletoft, "I am prepared for your interrogatories; but, you will recollect, I am not a willing evidence."

"Spoken like a lawyer," said Mapletoft, with more asperity than had ever been witnessed in his manner.

"I trust it will appear like an honest man—characters," continued he, smiling, "which Mr Mapletoft, I have had reason to suppose, does not think quite compatible."

"I was wrong, sir," replied Mapletoft; "I was betrayed into what I disapprove, by circumstances, at the moment to which you refer, and by intemperance in the present instance. I ask your pardon."

"You have it freely," cried Wettenhall.

"Well then, sir, may we venture to ask, where, on that evening, you met with Pen Owen?"

"At Barton Copse."

"At Barton Copse!" repeated the whole party, except Caleb, who had not quite reached the spot in time.

"And what was he doing there?" demanded the baronet.

"I met him suddenly, as I turned out of the gate from the fir plantation."

"Then *you* were in the Copse," observed Mapletoft. How, then, could the carriage (for the only road lies through the wood) have escaped your observation?"

"It must have passed before I entered."

"For God's sake, Mr Wettenhall," exclaimed Mrs Mapletoft, "tell us—was Ellice Craig there?"

"I certainly did not see her."

"Was she there, sir, to the best of your knowledge?" demanded Mapletoft, sternly.

"Are not you, my dear sir," observed Wettenhall, "assuming the character I have heard you condemn?"

"Sir, I cannot now stand for definitions. I ask for facts."

"On the contrary, for conjectures. I told you I had not seen Miss Craig."

"Nor knew of her being there?"

"I did not say that," answered Wettenhall, firmly.

"Tell us, dear Frank," cried Mrs Mapletoft, throwing herself on her knees before him, "if you know any thing concerning my beloved girl: conceal nothing, for the love of mercy!"

"It is too much," cried Wettenhall, striking his hand upon his forehead.

"What is too much?" demanded Sir Luke.

"Do you suspect, my dear sir," asked Mapletoft, "that"——

"I suspect, sir!—I will suspect nothing. You shall know all I know, and must spare me on any other point."

"Fair and honourable," cried the baronet.

"Speak," said Mapletoft, resuming his chair, and placing his wife near him, as if to guard her from some impending blow.

Mr Wettenhall, then, after appearing to collect himself for the task, related that, pursuing his evening walk, he heard, without perceiving the persons, a conversation, of which he could only catch imperfect sentences. The language of persuasion was occasionally interrupted by the tears of——

"Of whom?" cried Mrs Mapletoft.

"Of our lost Ellice," sighed Wettenhall—"that of remonstrance, and even reproach, succeeded," continued he.

"What were you doing, sir?" asked Mapletoft.

"I was thunderstruck, and incapable of moving, till I heard the final sentence, 'Death, or immediate flight!' When retreating, which it was necessary to do, in order to reach the spot, I heard the close of a carriage door, a faint scream, and the immediate whirl of wheels."

"D——n!" exclaimed the baronet.

"For Heaven's sake, be calm," cried the agitated Mapletoft; "be calm, sir: let us know all. What then—what then?"

"I hurried from the spot, calling out upon the name of Ellice,

as if to charm her flight. When flying to the gate, I met—I met”——

“Pen Owen?”

“I did sir.”

“Then he was not the partner of her flight?” said the vicar.

“How could he be?—you saw him afterwards.”

“True—true—my poor Nancy,” supporting his wife, who had fainted in his arms.

“Why—why—what had Pen to do with it?” cried Caleb, who had now seized young Wettenhall by the arm.

“Indeed, indeed, sir,” answered he, “I can say no more.”

“No more!—You’ve said nothing—nothing about poor Pen;—and he”——

“Is a scoundrel!” exclaimed Mapletoft.

“A what?”

“I feel for you, my friend Caleb, from my soul; but the words are registered, and I dare not, in my conscience, revoke them.”

“Pen Owen!—my darling—my only hope, a scoundrel!”

“Ellice Craig!—my fellow-sufferer,” squeezing Caleb’s hand, “my ewe lamb, that this merciless”——

“Don’t repeat the word—I can’t stand it,” sobbed Caleb, as he dropt down on the sofa. “He must be—but my heart will break if I hear it again!”

Mapletoft, whose feelings were, perhaps, as acute as any which had been appealed to during the passing scene, endeavoured to console those who had less control over their expression, by diverting their attention towards further enquiry. He asked young Wettenhall what had passed between Pen Owen and himself. The young man referred to the conditions on which he had stated the facts. He could not be, he would not be, questioned further; but the tears of a fine woman, which Mrs Mapletoft certainly was, and those which, perhaps, (though it be heresy to write it,) are more wringing to the heart of a virtuous old man, like Caleb, drew more than all the cross-examination of Mapletoft could have effected from the young man. A paper was delivered by him to that gentleman, which he immediately knew to be the writing of Pen Owen. His hands trembled as he unfolded the paper. It ran thus:—

“SIR,

“You are master of my secret; you have dared to interfere between me and my destiny, and must take the consequences of your own rashness. Either swear to conceal what you have witnessed, and withdraw yourself this night from Oldysleigh; or at Barton Copse, where we last parted, meet me at daybreak

to-morrow, armed, as I shall be, to decide the fate of one or both of us.—Yours,

“PEN OWEN.”

“Miserable young man!” groaned Mapletoft;—“are these the first-fruits of principles so laboriously, so affectionately inculcated?”—He walked up to Caleb Owen, who had attempted to rise from the sofa, and, taking his arm under his own, led him to a secluded apartment. He considered him the most sacred object of his solicitude. He returned, but with less command of his feelings, to support his wife to some retirement, where she might give freer vent to her tears, and be the sooner reconciled to her sufferings. Wettenhall had withdrawn after delivering the challenge, which appeared, indeed, to be wrung from him; and the Baronet, who had thrown himself back in his old armed-chair, seemed lost and bewildered by what had just passed. The good Vicar, who had an interest in all, soon came to his relief; and although nothing satisfactory passed in relation to the events, he reviewed them in such a manner as enabled the Baronet to submit, without recurrence to his former mode of giving vent to indignation or disappointment.

In the evening, the party, with the exception of young Wettenhall, whom business had called to Bristol, were re-assembled in Sir Luke's library. There the subject was resumed, and future plans discussed, if not with cheerfulness, at least with more composure and calmness than they could have been a few hours before. Uncle Caleb alone, who, unused to view a subject once impressed upon his mind in any other point than that in which it at first presented itself, sat abstracted, and silently meditating upon his misfortunes.

Every point was canvassed with the nicest attention to detail; and Mrs Mapletoft, who had not yet received any explanation with respect to the return of the two young men to the drawing-room, apparently on terms of friendship, and built a sudden hope of inconsistency in Wettenhall's narrative, was sensibly disappointed when her husband informed her that this appearance had been agreed upon and assumed, after Wettenhall had accepted the challenge, in order to prevent suspicion from any flying rumours of what was in agitation. The circumstance of Mr Benson's having seen Pen Owen on the road to London, in company with a lady, was now added to the sum of evidence against the delinquent; and, as if Fate had determined that no link should be wanting in this ponderous chain, a letter from Pen himself arrived by the next post, without any date within, but with the York post-mark in legible characters on the outside. This was confirmation too strong to admit of any softening

suggestion on the part of those most likely to offer it; and yet a little reflection, and a little reference to character, might have enabled poor Caleb, who refused at first to read the letter, to afford a clue to this circumstance, and, in some degree, to invalidate its force: for he had himself, immediately after the receipt of the former communication from York, informed his nephew of it; and any one acquainted with the nature of that young gentleman in such predicaments, might naturally infer that there was but a hop, step, or jump from the sentence in said letter to the mail-coach, if it was a seasonable hour, or in a chaise-and-four, if it was an unseasonable one, on the road to York. This never occurred to Caleb, who was the only person capable of starting the suggestion; and, as he had never mentioned having written this information, the evidence against the accused was complete and conclusive. Mr Mapletoft, however, who, with all his love of justice, partook not of her imputed blindness, begged Mr Caleb Owen's permission to read what his nephew had written. Mrs Mapletoft, who saw sunshine in the hope that the parties were at least married, seconded the request; and the letter was at length read out:—

“My ever dear Uncle,”—

“A puppy!” exclaimed Caleb;—but, suddenly checking himself, he added—“He can't hold me very dear, to treat me so!”—Mr Mapletoft went on:—

“I have not time for three words. I know your kind anxiety for me, and write only to relieve it. You may easily conceive the disorder of my mind, after what I have undergone. It is in vain longer to conceal what, I have no doubt, that scoundrel Wettenhall has betrayed. My crime, if such my dear uncle is disposed to consider it, is open to you; and, had I not been prevailed upon by the entreaties of my beloved Ellice, would have been discovered to you long ago. But I am scribbling when I should be acting. I have, it is true, reaped little advantage from my present mad scheme, as you will, I know, call it”——

“Mad!” interrupted Caleb; “to be sure I do—rank madness!”

Mr Mapletoft continued:—“I know not what to do—whether to plunge deeper, or give up the matter altogether. And yet can I return to you? No, no—I dare not face her friends, unless I bring back my Ellice with me, and as my wife. But there is madness in the thought! Oh! my lost, lost Ellice! Spare me—spare me, my ever dear uncle! Say nothing of my plans”——

“Of his plans!” exclaimed Caleb; “how should I know any thing about them?”

"Say nothing of my plans, or, at least, take the blame of this flight upon yourself; for it was you, indeed, that sent me off. I drew for two hundred upon you before I left town, and may have occasion for more, afloat as I am upon a new world. But I know this requires no apology from your ever grateful, affectionate, but wretched Nephew,

"P. O."

"Was there ever so brazen a dog?" exclaimed Sir Luke.

"Require no apology! Draw again upon me!" cried Caleb; —"I'll not honour it—I'll not honour it."

"What does he mean," said Mrs Mapletoft, "by saying you set him on, Mr Caleb?"

"Oh! it's all of a piece—it's a downright lie!—Heaven forgive me!—I have not spoken to him about it since he was a boy."

"How! You, then, did set him on!"

"Not I, bless your heart! So far from it, I told him I would on no account suffer him to fall in love with her."

"That was a sure way to put the thing in his head," said Sir Luke.

"But I told him I would not have it," replied Caleb; "and from that time, till this frightful business, he obeyed me; for I never once saw him make love since."

Mapletoft shook his head.

"You see how he speaks of that excellent young man, Wettenhall, for having detected him," said Sir Luke.

"It is lamentable!" sighed Mapletoft.

"He seems very unhappy too!" sighed Caleb.

"Guilt is a stinging monitor, Mr Owen," said the Vicar.

"I dare say you are right."

"He does not say," observed Mrs Mapletoft, in a subdued tone of voice, as if venturing upon new and delicate ground—"he does not say whether"—

"Whether what, my love?" said her husband.

"Whether he is married."

"Married!" exclaimed Caleb; "he can't be such a madman. Why, he is not twenty!"

"And yet," said Mr Mapletoft, "it is the only reparation he can make. Would you have him"—

"Oh no, no," replied Caleb, who had just caught the right clue—"no;—then he would be worse and worse!" sighed the good man.

"We must consider poor Ellice," said Mrs Mapletoft.

"She must have encouraged him," observed the Baronet.

"She may have loved him, you know, Sir Luke—they were bred up together."

"Nay, nay," said Mapletoft; "it is useless to look back; the evil is done, and we have no alternative left but"—

"But what?" asked his wife.

"To make the best of it," my love.

"But why does he not come back?" asked Mrs Mapletoft.

"My dear," replied her husband, "we had better not push our enquiries too far; we must wait till he condescends to explain."

"How explain?"

"Nay, is it not clear that no marriage has yet taken place?"

"He talks of her as his wife," said Mrs Mapletoft, looking at her husband with enquiring eyes.

"He—but why will you pursue this subject?"

"He—what? say on Mr Mapletoft, for pity's sake; any thing is better than suspense."

"Why, my love—if you will force me—does he not say, he cannot return with her unless as his wife? and yet as his wife—he does not return, and abruptly breaks off without assigning any reason why."—Mrs Mapletoft only wept.

"He can never be received back here," cried Sir Luke.

"You see, sir," said Mrs Mapletoft; removing her handkerchief from her eyes—"he appears to be unhappy and penitent."

"Deuce take his unhappiness—did he think of our unhappiness? and as for his penitence, does he not call my heir a scoundrel?"

"Ay," said Caleb, "but Mr Mapletoft called poor Pen a"—

"And so he is, Mr Owen—he is"—

"He is *my* heir, Sir Luke!—but I forgive you—I believe you are quite right, yet I have been used for so many years to"—

"Nay, nay, my good friend," said Mapletoft, "let us drop the subject"—

The subject however was not dropped, for many a day—nor for many a day, was any decisive measure taken. At length it was resolved that Caleb should write to the delinquent, strongly reprobating his conduct; and expressing his determination to supply him with no further means of persevering in his iniquitous career. Mrs Mapletoft undertook to write to Ellice Craig, and *promised* to be very severe. It was a sort of political question, in which Caleb undertook faithfully to discharge the duties of his own department, but proposed not to enter into the Pros and Cons, by which the cabinet had come to their final decision. These letters, it was taken for granted, would call forth penitential answers; which, after due time (the fixing of which however occupied nearly a whole evening's debate, between the Vicar and his wife) was to have the effect of softening them,

and by degrees to induce their forgiveness. The important question of marriage, or no marriage, was to be ascertained by the correspondence aforesaid: but Mrs Mapletoft had completely satisfied herself, in spite of her husband's inferences, that all was as it should be on that point. Her husband shook his head—Caleb doubted whether it ought to be *yet*, at all events as Pen was but a child; and Sir Luke stipulated only that ample satisfaction and concession should be made to his heir for the insults to which he had been subjected by his very justifiable interference. Thus the final seal being fixed to the arrangement, nothing now remained but to set the different forces at work—which being done, the "*status quo ante bellum*" seemed to be resumed. Habit is a master even more unbending than our passions; at least it holds its mastery over us, and enforces its shackles in so subtle and tyrannical a manner, that a good man may manfully shake off his allegiance to the one, whilst he yields without effort to the influence of the latter. The usual routine of life at Oldsleigh was resumed, and the same occupations, which circumstances had for a time interrupted, were again taken up, though with less spirit, and with decreased cheerfulness. "*On dine néanmoins*," says a French author. Indeed any body might have said that, as well as many other phrases, with which we authors interlard our works to show we are acquainted with more languages than our own. A man must eat; and why, it may be said, feed melancholy, because we must feed nature? We therefore carry our melancholy into society, and there we deposit it, little by little; and it is astonishing how it decreases, where several are at hand to take a share. I will not say, it was all gone in a month after Ellice Craig's flight; but I do aver, that what remained was neither obstreperous nor troublesome, and that things and matters were by degrees introduced, discussed and talked over, that had no relation whatever to the fair absentee—yet, was Ellice Craig not less beloved, nor less desired—and had you entered into the details of the evening of her flight, not a dry eye would have been found at the baronet's table. "Such is the mechanism of the human heart," says a philosopher, "its fibres and its nerves—its fiddlestick's end," as our friend Caleb would have said upon such an occasion. "It is," says the Christian, as indeed the good vicar *did* say, without making the subject too abstract, even for the conception of honest Caleb, "it is the merciful provision of HIM, who wills that we be tempted not, nor tried beyond our strength."

"His will be done"—added Caleb in a tone and murmur that would have made even a modern philosopher believe him to be in earnest. Mrs Mapletoft smiled through her tears, and observed, that "she was glad to find she was not unfeeling, in being able to

bear up under so severe a loss." "I have preached in vain," said her husband, with a look that carried any thing but reproach with it, "if your conviction did not forerun your practice."

CHAPTER XVII.

It is high time we should now look after our hero, more especially as he appears to require all the aid in our power to enable him to maintain his ground in so unequal a contest as that about to be carried on against him by the confederated powers at Oldysleigh.

At the end of a certain number of days, which, at his rate of travelling, the reader may readily calculate upon paper, if he please, when he is informed that Mr Pen Owen had passed from London to York, from thence to Gretna Green, and so back to London again, we find him stretched at full length upon a sofa, at No. —, I forget the number, on the first floor of a very respectable lodging-house in Lower Brook Street, Grosvenor Square. I am aware that readers of history, in general, expect to be admitted into the very arcana of the human heart, and to receive, in distinct and set phrases, all that passes within, just as audibly as if communicated through a speaking trumpet; but I have always thought, that even among our very best ancient historians, whose names it must be unnecessary to repeat to the majority of my readers, there appears to be rather too strong a disposition to detail, in set phrases and paragraphs, the harangues, speeches, orations, and dialogues of celebrated heroes and statesmen, considering they did not possess the invaluable privileges of our own times, of short-hand writers, and a daily press with a hundred tongues. Under such circumstances, the intervention of a century or two might appear to oppose obstacles insurmountable to such precise and verbal reports, and must, at all events, have afforded a vigorous exercise to the energies of the mind and the powers of imagination. But these are nothing, absolutely nothing, when compared with the improvements introduced in these latter ages by their modern successors. I do not profess (it will long ago have appeared that I am but a novice in these affairs) to be sufficiently master of the process by means of which we may obtrude ourselves into the penetralia of the human heart; nor can I pretend to account for the very accurate and detailed manner in which the public are, by these

gentlemen, put in possession not only of the thoughts, but the individual movements, agitations, impulses, ideas innate, or notions impressed, in spite of their apparent security and concealment, in every man, woman, and child, under the solid integuments of flesh, cartilage, muscles, and bone, not to insist upon their intersection at all points, by currents and sub-currents of veins, arteries, &c. &c.; but that the power does exist, and is daily exhibited, I have only to appeal to the experience of my readers to prove. I know indeed, and I speak it with reverence, that much has been done towards simplifying the system, by those distinguished metaphysicians who have honoured Scotland, some by being born, others by being bred, within her pale; but, in the first place, I have great reason to believe that historians of the class to which, it may be supposed, I particularly refer, are not likely to be much influenced by any bearings upon questions of a metaphysical nature; and secondly, (I speak under correction,) because I rather believe, as far as I have been able to ascertain, the most sanguine of the ingenious and learned sophists who inhale the very atmosphere of metaphysics at the foot of the Calton, have never positively ranked their favourite pursuit under the head of accurate sciences. I applied, indeed, to my bookseller, for information upon this head, as I deemed it necessary to be armed at all points, like those with whom I was about to enter the lists, but being, as we all know, not only a very excellent but a very mysterious personage, he could or would inform me no further than by a smile at my ignorance, and a significant application of the point of his forefinger, or index, to that part of the cranium, in the neighbourhood of which is supposed to exist the sensorium, or, in the vulgar tongue, the brain. I say in the neighbourhood; for I have since been induced, from certain lights I have received, to believe that he fixed his point on some particular protuberance which he might feel, but which I could not discern, in order to indicate the immediate organ through which intelligence from the interior was to be extracted; but not possessing much knowledge of the theory of those excellent and profound gentlemen, Messieurs Gall and Spurzheim, and not having at that time received the satisfactory confirmation of its truth and genuineness, so solemnly illustrated by the ingenious and accurate traveller, Dr Peter Morris, the suggestions of the bibliopolist were lost upon me. It may, indeed, be inferred, that when a compiler of history undertakes the task of conducting his hero through a large portion of his life and adventures, he has the authority of that person, in some shape or other, to which he may refer for his facts; and that, consequently, the same authority which supplies these may also supply the motives

to action. All I have to object to this is, that men in general are very little acquainted with their own motives, which are not only disguised to themselves, but, if compared with their subsequent conduct, will appear ready to start up and deny their having had any influence upon it. Ask Lord A——, or Mr B——, or Sir C——, what urges them to such loud and bitter invectives against Lord D——, Mr E——, or Sir F——, on the other side of the house, and they will answer, without hesitation, a love of their country. They probably have answered (not being on oath) to the best of their knowledge; but whether they have answered truly is another question. If we had been blessed with the patent which Jove's jester solicited from his imperial master, we might, perhaps, find a multitude of little streams, all pouring their tributary dribbles into the main sluice, which finally sets the wheel in motion. But without this visible peep-hole, without even any enlarged portion of metaphysical or craniological illumination, we may, from the little smattering we have been able to pick up respecting the nature of man, from our collision with him in passing through the world, be pretty certain that the love of country, so manfully and conscientiously assumed by said lord, gentleman, and baronet, is frequently subjected to a certain process of internal fermentation, (far be it from me to dogmatize on the nature of the process,) in which a love of place, profit, power, ambition, or, in the more comprehensive term, of *self*, (which stands for all,) has so mixed itself, that, in bottling it off in a hurry, it may easily be wrongly labelled, and even mistaken by the parties themselves. Now, I do think our time would be very ill bestowed upon the investigation of such processes; and, what is more important, I humbly conceive, (for I have ever found it so myself,) we are likely to derive as little amusement as profit from such a mode of proceeding; with which observation, lest the reader should be prompted to apply it to another place, I beg leave to conclude this long digression, premising only, that when my hero thinks aloud, I have the additional notes of an eavesdropper at hand, for the purpose of affording satisfaction to every class of readers. On all other occasions, I trust, I shall stand acquitted if I produce that promising young gentleman, together with all the *personæ* of this real drama, in coat and waistcoat order, without being expected to go further than the outer cuticle, should impending misfortunes, which I foresee, from a reference to my *Adversaria*, strip him or them of the aforesaid decent covering.

We left our unfortunate friend Pen Owen, if I recollect right, stretched at his length upon a sofa in Brook Street. The fermentation, of which we have spoken so learnedly, and so much

at large, was evidently going forward at this moment, (and was the occasion of the whole of the foregoing valuable observations,) when, starting up, and ringing his bell violently, a servant, whom he had hired on his first arrival in town, made his appearance.

"Why did you answer the bell, sirrah?" demanded he

"Because your honour rang it," replied the man.

"And why are you not at Bow Street and Marlborough Street with those notices?"

"Because I'm come back, your honour."

"And why haven't you brought the answers?"

"Because they gave me none, your honour."

"Why did not you tell me so before?"

"Because you were asleep, your honour."

"Why did not you wake me, rascal?"

"Because I knew better, your honour."

"Know better!—because you were a fool."

"Because I was *not* a fool, your honour."

"How, sirrah?"

"Yes, your honour; for when I woke you at Ferrybridge, you threw the candlestick at my head."

"The candle, blockhead?"

"The candle, your honour, hit my blockhead, and the stick would have broken it, if they had not parted company by the way."

"Scoundrel!—you broke the most enchanting illusion ever granted to dreaming man."

"I did not know but your honour might be dreaming it over again; and those pistols there"——

"I tell thee, blockhead, I haven't been asleep."

"Then your honour shammed it better than any man I ever knew."

"Don't prate, you puppy, but fly and enquire for letters to A. B. and X. Y., at the Temple Coffee-House, and the Salopian. Call at the *Morning Chronicle* and *Courier* offices with those advertisements, and tell them to repeat them till Saturday. Enquire at the Prince of Wales's for letters in my own name; and at Stevens's, in Bond Street, and at the Chapter Coffee House, in St Paul's Churchyard, for answers to previous enquiries."

"Yes, your honour."

"Stop—are you running off with half a message?"

"Half, your honour?"

"Here—call again at the public offices, and say I insist upon answers."

"Yes, your honour—and if they won't give them"——

“ Hang them ! ”

“ Yes, your honour ; but by the same token, they may hang *me* ; for it’s more in their way.”

“ Curse your chattering—off with you, and be back within an hour. I shall want you.”

The servant promised his honour to do what he knew was impossible ; and Pen, snatching up his hat, sallied forth to give some vent to his agitated feelings. The reader may suppose, from the information received at Oldysleigh, that Ellice Craig, or Mrs Pen Owen, was locked up in the bed-room in Brook Street ; or that she had just stepped out to furnish herself with some fashionable millinery, round the corner : but the fact is, that Pen Owen was as ignorant of the abode, as of the fate, of that young lady, and whilst he was enduring every possible obloquy among his best friends at Oldysleigh, for having possessed himself of her person, he was suffering actual torture, both of body and mind, from his ignorance equally of her place of abode, or her fate. He had posted off to York, as we have seen, in consequence of the clue supposed to be afforded by the anonymous letter from that place ; but if the object of his anxiety and search were really there, he had no possible means of discovering her, although he had called to his aid the police of that ancient and venerable city in pursuing his researches. He had traced from thence two young runaways, as far as Gretna ; and came up with them just in time to interrupt the parties on the eve of the ceremony, and to receive a bullet through the crown of his hat in return for his promptitude. He had pursued a female Bas Bleu from Carlisle to Keswick, who was on a pilgrimage to the poets, and who, mistaking him for a highwayman, slipped out of the carriage at an obscure inn, ordering the boy to drive on to the next stage for assistance ; whilst he, coming up soon after, tracked the empty chaise for seven miles, and narrowly escaped the hands of justice, the *posse comitatus* having been assembled in order to detain him. At Durham, seeing a female form at a window, which his imagination conjured into a resemblance of Ellice Craig, he walked up and down before the house, till he became suspected by the police, who carried him before a magistrate, where his incoherent answers had very nearly secured him a lodging in the Lunatic Asylum. His servant, who, the reader will already observe, was what is called a shrewd fellow, knew too well how to turn his madness, if mad he was, to a better account, than by confiding him to the care of regular practitioners, explained matters to the satisfaction of the bench ; and having assured his master that the London police and the London journals afforded much better means of pursuing his enquiries, he clapped four horses to the

chaise, and would have had six, had not the prudent valet brought back to his recollection the fate he had just so narrowly escaped.

Upon his arrival in town, he resumed active measures, and from six in the morning till twelve at night, he kept his servant and himself in incessant motion. Nothing but disappointment had hitherto attended his efforts : neither rewards nor threats, nor pathetic appeals ; neither Bow Street runners, paragraph writers, nor posting-bills, had produced the slightest information upon the subject of his enquiries.

Returning to his lodgings, after having explored half the town, and called twice over at every hotel at the west end of it, he found his servant just arrived from the unsuccessful discharge of his several commissions, with the exception of a letter with the York post-mark.

He started—and for a moment did not recognize the handwriting of his uncle—at last catching it—“ My uncle at York ! ” he exclaimed, and tore open the letter.—In a moment he felt assured that the retreat of the lost sheep had been traced even where he had failed. He threw himself into a chair, and prepared himself, as we are all apt to do, when about to enjoy the full disclosure of some happily anticipated intelligence, which has only been slightly hinted to us—for the termination of his anxious labours. Alas ! he found it dated Oldysleigh, and quickly saw that it had been forwarded, in the first instance, to the post-office at York, where he had indeed, for another purpose, left his address in London. This was rather a damper ; but the first word staggered him indeed, for it presented to his eyes a very large “ SIR,” which the tremulous hand of the writer seemed to have almost elongated into an additional syllable of serious import, when applied to a gentleman of irritable feelings. He turned over the page impatiently to look at the signature. “ Caleb Owen,” was written with as much precision as any signature to one of his well-known checks. “ And yet,” faltered he, “ it can’t be ! ” He read on :—

“ SIR,

“ This will meet you in due course of post, if you haven’t shifted your quarters again, which I take to be very likely, and if so you can’t answer it ; which indeed I desire you not to do on any account whatever. You may be in jail by this time, which will be your own fault, not mine, seeing it was all your own extravagance and folly, with which I have nothing to do, as our joint-stock concern is clean at an end, and dissolved. You will hereby understand that I shall honour no more drafts or bills of yours after the date hereof ; so let me know how you

are to do without money, as I shall be curious to hear; but don't pretend to write to tell me, *unless*," (This word was legible in spite of the very careful erasure of a whole line and a half, apparently by another hand, which might well have defied the most subtle black-letter reader to decipher. Pen was, however, too intent upon the matter, to be taken off the scent—he read on:)—"You must have very great impudence—yes, I have written it—to ask me to conceal your strange and mad doings, not to give them a name it would break any heart to write"—(Here were more *chevaux de frize* to cover some failure of Caleb's resolution; and the sentence concluded:)—"I cannot for the soul of me imagine—I therefore throw you off; yes, I throw you quite off, as a worthless wicked young man, and I do not know whether I shall ever forgive you." (Here the hand appeared to be less steady than in some other parts of the letter, and the ink was blurred over the three last words.) "I am resolute, and nothing shall move me;—there now, sir;—I will never acknowledge one who has conducted himself in such a way," (blot, blot,) "as I will not mention on any account. Your abominable abuse of that good young gentleman, Mr Francis Wettenhall, as the worthy Sir Luke says, is all of a piece with the rest; and you would have been guilty, oh! Pen Owen, my ("once" interlined) loved nephew, of murdering in cold blood, an innocent fellow creature, for standing in the way of your wicked wantonness. Naughty Pen, think of that, and hasten, for your own sake to make your peace with Heaven, or you will have no peace here, I promise you. Why, what did ye do galloping off to York, at the Lord knows what expense, when you might just as well have staid in London, which, to say truth, is a bad place enough for young folk:—but you had no money to spare, and I should like to know where you are to raise a shilling when you want it. I say I should like to know that;—I honoured your last draft, which I'm told I ought not to have done; but as I hadn't given notice, I took it upon myself; but that's no reason for my ever paying another shilling, which I certainly shall not. You may well call poor Ellice, lost! lost!—Poor little soul! she's lost indeed, though I trust her poor soul may be saved. But what had you to do with her?—didn't I warn you, years ago, to have nothing to do with her, because I knew what would come of it: and now every body sees it with a vengeance. I don't often take upon me to talk of things much beforehand, but here I think I showed what I have never been very vain of, and therefore won't boast. But what are you the better for being *both* lost?—I should like to know that. But I don't desire you to tell me, for I am by no means certain I would open a letter if you were to write me

one. Mr Francis Wettenhall is no scoundrel (bad language, Pen) for telling us all about it; it was forced from him, as friend Mapletoft says, and we must have known it sooner or later. But what was the use of running all over the country, from Dan to the other place? We have heard of your doings at the Scotch blacksmith's, and a pretty business you would have made of it, if you had shot the sham parson. D'ye suppose we were all scampering after your heels, that you were in such a hurry? And, Pen, don't you attempt to come down here without the dear girl. It would be a pretty business after all, as you say, to present yourself here without her, and without her being your wife; so that is resolved on;—I tell you that for your comfort, though she be but an orphan, and one I did my best to guard you against; not but I love her dearly, and would do any thing rather than you should marry her, which, however, it is thought best, and indeed must be. No, as good Mr Mapletoft and Sir Luke say—who are standing over me—I will have nothing to do with you, unless you bring Ellice home as your wife. I will not, I am determined, as my worthy friends truly say—I will not be bamboozled into any more drafts or letters. So, no more, and I am sorry I can't add my blessing—(Here the sentence was abruptly closed by a dash of the pen, too free and flourishing for Caleb's counting-house precision.)

“From your indignant Uncle,

“nevertheless your loving Friend,

(this was evidently what the learned call an interpolation, but would have satisfied the most sceptical of scholiasts, that it was from the author's own hand, though disguised by haste,)

“CALEB OWEN.”

This strange composition, which may occasion a smile at the simplicity of the writer, whose situation is better understood by ourselves who have been behind the scenes at Oldysleigh, produced a very different effect upon poor Pen Owen, who, throwing himself on his sofa, burst into a flood of tears. It must be recollected that he had had no opportunity of rubbing off his country rust, since his residence in town; and, although within a stone's throw of Bond Street, I aver the fact of his being surprised into a very hearty cry, at the close of his uncle's letter. It is true it was scarcely intelligible to him; but he fully felt that he had incurred his uncle's displeasure, and that he was banished, and forbidden to return to his more than paternal roof. He perceived, also, that the letter, so unlike his uncle's simple and matter-of-fact style, was suggested by the joint feelings of the whole circle of his friends. He acknowledged to himself that he had been guilty of imprudence in running half

over England after an object of which, however dear to his soul, he had no possible chance of gaining scent ; but still there was nothing criminal in all this. When, however, he read the letter a second time, he perceived, as he thought, the real ground of the general indignation expressed against him, and that his passion for Ellice Craig, betrayed, as he supposed, by Wettenhall to his friends, was the substantial cause of his disgrace, in which she was made to participate ; and though, if found, a sullen consent would be given to their union, no further favour was to be expected. His feelings then took another turn, and, glorying in the affection which had thus subjected him to degradation, he determined to hug his chains the closer, and leave the angry burst of his friends to subside, under the conviction of their injustice. His high spirit was wounded at the reproaches of his uncle on the score of pecuniary accommodation, which, in his opinion, was conferring, instead of receiving a favour, on the part of him who accepted it. He determined, therefore, at once, to render himself independent of every thing but his own talents, which the discernment of his father had long proved, to his satisfaction, were calculated to make a distinguished figure in the world. His love for the good old man, Caleb, was not lessened ; but he felt that the contracted notions he had imbibed in trade had not only derogated from the dignity of the Cwm Owen family, but had rendered him a very unfit person to retain the honourable situation of being any longer his chancellor or his treasurer.

What could be the object of his uncle, and, as he clearly perceived, of all his friends at Oldysleigh, in professing a desire that he should marry Ellice Craig, whilst they declared themselves hostile to his passion, was one of the points which puzzled him most ; and if, instead of confounding the whole together, during the internal process, (mentioned on a former occasion more at large) he had selected this one, and written to his friends for a direct explanation, not only would the misunderstanding which subsisted between the parties have probably been done away, but the remaining portion of this most interesting history could never have been written ; so that it remains for the reader to decide whether he feels more offended that Pen Owen should want discretion, than that I should want materials to prove that indiscretion was rather a conspicuous feature in his character. If he did not, however, seek an explanation, he was determined so far to disobey his uncle, as to express his determination of obeying him in future ; and (fortunately again for this history) his letter was so ingeniously worded as to confirm all parties in their error.

“ My still and ever dear Uncle,—

“ Your letter, if it was intended to break my heart, has nearly effected its purpose. I have nothing to offer in extenuation of my crime. Crime did I again call it?—no; in the face of heaven and of earth I glory in what I have done, and should be, even at the risk of your displeasure, my dearest and earliest friend, compelled to do, and to glory in it, were it to do again. Can I condemn myself for having loved, even to distraction, a being who has no fault, unless her love for me be deemed one? I, at least, cannot so consider it, nor can you expect I should. Am I to blame for what followed?—I was betrayed. Your new friend, Wettenhall, discovered our secret, and availed himself of it—a dastard! Could I see my angel torn from me, without an effort to make her mine? Was not love, all-powerful love, to be obeyed, where every thing was at stake? Oh, my good uncle, could you condescend to insult your poor, miserable, discarded child? How is it possible for me, circumstanced as you know me to be, to present, as my wife, the lost Ellice? Distraction is in the thought: why torture me with it?—But I have done. Be assured, my good uncle Caleb, I will never receive pecuniary aid from one whose heart is closed against my affection. Be satisfied, I will never barter my principles for money; and the independence of my soul rejects all aid but that which the energies of my own mind will amply supply. Heaven bless you, my dearest friend, and those friends of my youth around you. *They* have loved; and, though not like me, might and will, I trust, hereafter be disposed to palliate my errors. I shall no more offend you or them. Forget me, as if I were not. Forgive me; for, probably, you will never see or hear further from

“ Your grateful, affectionate, but

“ Heart-broken Nephew,

“ PENDARVES OWEN.”

We will leave our distressed hero to collect together his materials for creating independence, and to pursue the phantom of poor Ellice Craig, two objects, apparently very compatible in a young ardent mind, under twenty, with about as much ballast on board as would steady a cock-boat in the Bay of Biscay.

The receipt of this letter at Oldysleigh occasioned no small degree of disappointment and indignation. All their previous calculations were baffled by the persevering obstinacy of the young runaway, who, instead of falling into the net the conspirators had laid for him, had spread his wings, and taken a new flight, even out of sight. Caleb once more boasted of his

foresight ; for, in his affection for his nephew, he dreaded driving him to despair, and would have made his objurgatory letter, in fact, any thing but what it professed to be, had he not been under the immediate eye of those who considered themselves better politicians than the tender-hearted old man. Mapletoft, who possessed the far greater part, if not the whole stock of judgment which was contained within the circle of the party assembled, thought he perceived an inconsistency in the conduct of Pen Owen, which could not be referred to the mere ebullition of youthful passion and inconsiderateness. It was true, indeed, he argued, that the contrition of Ellice Craig might be so strong, in a mind hitherto pure and unsullied by any act of imprudence, as to render her averse to a meeting with her friends, until time should have more reconciled her to her new situation. But why the bare mention of her return to Oldysleigh should raise such a storm in the mind of the young man, he could not, with all his sagacity, discover, without concluding, what, in the extremity of his prejudice against Pen Owen, he had never even imagined, namely, that he was a seducer, and, influenced by false notions of honour, had rejected, as a wife, the victim of his passion. He had unfortunately taken for granted, that which rested merely on inference ; for, although Frank Wettenhall had stated nothing that was not literally true, the identifying Pen Owen with the person who had carried off Ellice Craig, merely because he appeared on the spot at the moment, although it might be a ground of suspicion, was by no means an evidence of the fact. This, however, was so rooted in the minds of all at Oldysleigh, and seemed to be so clearly included in Wettenhall's statement, that every line written subsequently by Pen Owen, which could admit of a doubtful construction, was set down, even by the candid Mapletoft himself, as an admission of his guilt. The circumstance of his having been seen in a carriage, hastening towards London, with a female companion, was another link in the chain of evidence against him ; yet this arose out of the very simple occurrence of finding all the post-horses engaged at Devizes, and entreating a lady, to whom he explained the cause of his hurry and anxiety, and who humanely consented to carry him on to the next stage in her carriage. His adventure at Gretna Green had been repeated by the parties whose progress towards the consummation of human happiness he had interrupted, and communicated, as a good story by a Bristol bagman, to a Bristol merchant. The latter, in conveying it to poor Caleb, mended it, to make it match with the real state of the case, as he supposed, and assured the heart-broken uncle that his nephew had fired at Vulcan for hesitating to perform the office of priest to the votaries of his good lady Venus. In the

two letters written by Pen, he had appeared to glory in that which he never even dreamed of; and, in the fatal decree issued by the council of greybeards at Oldysleigh, he was condemned upon his own confession, which had little or no reference to the crime with which he stood charged. Whether the doubts and surmises which were beginning to dawn on the mind of Mapletoft might eventually have led to a discovery of the truth, cannot now be ascertained; for, before he had sufficiently compared them with the facts of the case, a circumstance occurred which banished them from his mind, and finally confirmed him in the conviction that all was as had been originally supposed. This was no other than a letter from Ellice Craig herself, in which she acknowledged the receipt of the letter dispatched to York by Mrs Mapletoft. She added, that her situation was such, that when it came to be explained, she trusted she should find pardon for the extraordinary step she had been induced to take; but that the most sacred obligation for the present sealed her lips—that the protection she was under was of so sacred a nature, that she willingly submitted to the temporary privations which it imposed—and that her peace of mind, eventually her happiness in life, were probably ensured by an event which threatened to involve both. “Mr Wettenhall,” she added, “may afford a better clue to the elucidation of all this than I am at present permitted to offer to you.” The conclusion, however, of this mysterious epistle was still more embarrassing to the Oldysleigh circle, not, as we have had occasion frequently to observe, remarkable for the quickness or accuracy of their conjectures. “Let me not wound the feelings of my ever-adored Mamma Mapletoft, if, having no further claim upon the name I have hitherto borne, I simply subscribe myself her affectionate and adoring child,

“ELLICE.”

It was carried, *nem. con.*, that Pen and Ellice were playing the fool together, and trifling with their own happiness, and that it was vain to interfere further, until the time should come when they would be starved into a capitulation, by having their supplies cut off, or reduced to a surrender, by the ingenuity of the Oldysleigh tacticians.

Mr Frank Wettenhall, who had been for some time absent, returned soon after the receipt of Ellice Craig's curious letter, and, upon its being shown to him, he observed, that his situation was one of peculiar delicacy, if not of hardship: that he appeared to have incurred the displeasure of two persons whom it had been his chief anxiety, after being received into Sir Luke's favour, to conciliate. This had arisen from his being accidentally thrown into a situation, where the discovery of their secret on

his part was inevitable. He again regretted the force that had been put upon him to wring this secret from him ; adding, that the only consolation he felt, arose from the certainty that it must have been soon discovered ; and even by the confession of the parties themselves, as appeared in their letters. The young gentleman, therefore, seemed to be confirmed in the same error which prevailed throughout the family. He, however, scarcely ever recurred to the subject : and evinced a delicacy duly estimated by all, except Caleb, who could not help considering him in the light of a rival to his nephew, whom, in his heart, perhaps, he loved better than ever, from the mere circumstance of his being so long absent from him. He, indeed, condemned the crime of which Pen was supposed to be guilty ; but as he had never heard of associations, so was he not much in the habit of forming them in his mind ; and, when the crime was not reiterated by his companions, he never could bring himself to consider poor Pen, *per se*, a criminal.

Frank Wettenhall, however, paid every attention to the old gentleman, and sometimes soothed him with hopes that things might not turn out so badly as was at first apprehended. But Caleb kept his favourite high-road, and looked straight forward ; where, being naturally near-sighted, he discerned little beyond his own nose ; but of this little, we who know him tolerably well are aware, he was very tenacious ; so that, let Frank do or say what he would, he always appeared to stand in the light of Pen, as long as Pen could not be seen by Caleb.

The young heir continued to pass his time in the most rational pursuits : he devoted himself to his books the early part of the day, retiring to his study immediately after the breakfast-hour : he then rode, or walked out ; and was a frequent visiter in the neighbouring cottages, where his attentions were affectionately received, as an earnest of his future protection when he should become master of the property. He appeared frequently as the advocate of any unfortunate delinquent, when brought before the tribunal of Sir Luke in his judgment seat, and often obtained the acquittal of a petty criminal, by pledges of security for his future good conduct ; nor did he stop here, for, considering promises of amendment, given in the moment of detection, to partake more of remorse than repentance, he rarely lost sight of his object, until, by reasoning and precept, he had convinced him that honesty was the best policy. He seemed to entertain some singular notions upon religious topics, which Mr Mapletoft had more than once endeavoured to analyse ; but a young man who reads much may incur the suspicion of free-thinking in the process of his enquiry after truth ; and there was so little of the spirit of dogmatism in young Wettenhall, that the good pastor occasionally

cast in an handful of good seed, which he trusted would grow up at length, in a soil where no tares at least appeared to have taken root. There was a peculiar grace, and that *bonhomie*, as the French call it, in all he said or did, that, without having the appearance of flattery, he seemed to put every body in good humour with himself, than which nothing is so likely to make a man good humoured to others; so that the popularity of Frank Wettenhall may be said to have been deeply rooted in the hearts of all his new friends and allies.

One morning, during breakfast, the servant delivered a letter to Mr Wettenhall, saying that the bearer was in the servants' hall, waiting for an answer. Frank appeared agitated; and Sir Luke hoped there was nothing unpleasant in his letter.

"Nothing," he answered, "nothing of any importance—but"——

"But what?" asked Sir Luke.

"Nothing, I assure you, Sir Luke, that"——then turning to the servant, he desired him to tell the person that he would send the answer.

Sir Luke again enquired if it was any thing in which he could be of service; but, before Frank could reply to the offer, the servant returned with a message, that the woman would wait his honour's pleasure, but could not return without an answer. Frank seemed at a loss how to act: he requested permission to retire, in order that he might answer the letter; and desiring the servant to tell the woman she might wait, he quitted the apartment. In his confusion, he left the note he had received open upon the breakfast table; and Sir Luke, whose curiosity unfortunately got the better of his sense of right, cast his eyes over it, and soon received the penalty of his transgression. He was rushing out of the room just as Frank Wettenhall, with every mark of distress in his countenance, entered at another door to redeem his error. The baronet encountered Mapletoft in the passage, and, seizing both his hands, exclaimed, in a voice of contending emotions, "Frank is an angel of light, Mapletoft; and Pen Owen is—a VILLAIN!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHILST the scenes which we have recorded in the last chapter were passing at Oldysleigh, Pen Owen was quietly seated in

lodgings more suited to his present finances, up two pair of stairs in Bury Street. His pride, perhaps, would still have revolted at this elevation, had he not been assured by his landlady that an officer of the guards had inhabited the apartments; which was literally true, as he had removed into them from the floor below, in order to have his own rooms new papered, according to a previous stipulation. It is astonishing how much falsehood and misrepresentation creep into the world through the medium of literal truths. Hence it is that our wise forefathers, no doubt, compared that formal mode of extracting facts, (which might have answered the purpose intended tolerably well, if the manner of administering it were equally well secured,) by insisting upon "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Strictly speaking, however, the clause of the highest importance is that which is least emphatically placed, (if I may be allowed the expression,) being neither the leading nor final member of the sentence, which, judging from other public annunciations of the due rank and location of characters, is the true and proper position for what is intended to be pointed out to our especial observation and preference. Pen Owen, however, was satisfied, and we have nothing further to do with the question. He had directed his servant (whom he still retained, as a thing to which, like a coat or hat, he had for so many years been accustomed) to order, from a neighbouring stationer, a ream of paper, a stock of pens, ink, and a blotting-book, being resolved to set about some work, in the intervals which were left between his hourly excursions in search of the fair Ellice. What the nature of his work was to be, had as yet never entered into his contemplation; and when we reflect upon the rapid changes in public opinion, which take place in the metropolis of this mighty empire, there is some allowance to be made for the indecision of our young friend in the choice of a subject. Another excuse, indeed, of a more valid kind might be mentioned, namely, his utter ignorance of every thing that was going forward in the world, except what the newspapers taken in by Sir Luke might have afforded, if he had ever looked into them; but I am of opinion, that this is a plea which Pen would never have offered in extenuation of his daily procrastination, for he entertained no such suspicion respecting himself. Still he was perpetually writing, when he was too much tired and exhausted to continue his rambling, although I have never discovered that he got further than detached sentences, or that he ever travelled out of the romance of love. Something, however, at the end of the first week, he found was necessary to be done, for a few guineas only remained of his former stock, and the very novelty of being asked for money, without immediately disbursing it, struck him with a force that roused him to a sense of his real situation.

Lost in reflections upon the difficulties in which he was involved, he was one morning crossing the end of St James's Street, when he met almost the only man with whom he was even slightly acquainted out of his own circle. This was no other than Major Irwin, or, as he was called in the country, Black Jack. Pen, after a slight bow, which was all that he considered himself entitled to give or receive upon his very slight acquaintance with the Oldysleigh hermit, was passing on; but the major stopped: and, after a few words had passed, asked him when he had left the country, and what he was doing in town? Two very short questions, it must be granted, but which did not admit of equally short answers. Pen, who would have answered freely to the first stranger who had civilly put the same interrogatories to him, entered at once into an analysis of his feelings, anxieties, motives, and peregrinations, by which time the gentlemen had paraded from the top to the bottom of St James's Street.

"I had heard," said the major, after Pen had closed his animated narrative, "of the elopement of Miss Craig, some time before I left the country, but there was but one opinion, as far as I could learn, as to her companion."

"Who!" exclaimed Pen, starting round to face him, and seizing hold of a button, "who, in the name of Heaven?"

"Young man," said the major, "you forget where we are, and I am almost afraid of answering your question."

"Nay, nay," replied Pen, retreating to the major's side; in which evolution half-a-dozen beaux in a string were very nearly lodged in the kennel, and half of whose lives might have been endangered, had Pen seen the expression upon their countenances; "for pity's sake, Major Irwin"——

"Well, my good sir, be patient; for from the situation in which I see you, I can have no doubt of the report being false."

"Who—who was it?" cried Pen.

"Yourself."

"Myself!" almost screamed our hero—"why—how was it possible—was not the dear girl torn from me?"

"True; but that was considered a feint on your part."

"A feint!—what!—they not only concluded me to be a villain, but a studied, an artful, a deliberate one. Pardon me, Major Irwin," added he very drily; "this could not have been the opinion of my friends."

"My habits of life, you know, Mr Owen, have prevented my cultivating the acquaintance of your friends; I speak, therefore, only of the reports."

"Reports!—Oh, Major Irwin, I would consent to be thought that villain, had I but the reward of Ellice Craig. No, no—do
* believe me; she—she—would never forgive me."

Much more to the same effect passed before the parties separated, which they did not do until the major, who seemed to relax in town from the character he supported in the country, and to have conceived a favourable opinion of our young friend, had made a proposition that they should dine together at a coffee-house on the succeeding day.

Pen retired to his lodgings that evening lighter in heart, and more soothed in his feelings, than he had felt for many a previous day. The major's manners did not partake of the harshness of his countenance; and the sympathy which he appeared to show in his sufferings, or at least the patient good-humour with which he had listened to his rhapsodies, hurried our hero into a sort of regard, that required, in his mind, a very few days to ripen into perfect friendship. It must be confessed, however, without being so sanguine in our expectations or feelings, that, insulated as our hero was in the heart and centre of all that society could afford, the very appearance of such a disposition to cultivate his acquaintance was a matter of real and substantial consolation.

He resolved to consult the major, at their next meeting, upon the best mode of converting his talents into cash. He was as confident of the accommodation as a merchant of established character on 'Change when he prepares to negotiate his bills for some grand speculation; all the difficulty that presented itself to his imagination was the mode and form of drawing upon Messieurs the bibliopolists of the metropolis.

In the course of the morning he lounged into one of those many receptacles of wit and learning which are to be found in the parish of St James's; and having asked for two or three books for which he had occasion, sat down at a table, which was well supplied with the journals and publications of the day. He had not been long seated, when a little shrewd-looking man, laying down a volume he had been running over, was asked by a gentleman who sat next to him, "What he thought of the work?" which proved to be a ministerial pamphlet.

"A poor thing, sir."

"They say it is by —," whispered his neighbour.

"It may be—it's quite bad enough for him."

"Bad enough, Mr Pepperal!—why, surely, he is one of the cleverest writers of the party."

"That may be," returned the critic, with a significant sneer, "and yet he may nevertheless be the author of this precious defence."

"I have heard," observed a third gentleman, who just lifted his eyes from the newspaper he was reading, "the work attributed to another person."

"Very likely," replied Mr Pepperal; "but my friend Gossiper is, I believe, correct in his opinion."

"I rather think not, sir," retorted the other, still reading his paper.

"I rather think, sir," observed Pepperal, with a self-sufficient air, "it is. I am not apt to be deceived, since I form my judgment rather upon internal than external evidence."

"Your judgment may satisfy *yourself*, sir," replied the reader.

"It will satisfy others, I presume, sir," retorted Mr Pepperal.

"Not mine, sir," coolly replied his antagonist.

"But, sir," interposed Mr Gossiper, "I know it to be Mr ——."

"Sir," turning with some asperity upon the last speaker, "I know it to be another's."

"That can't be, sir—I had it from undoubted authority," said Gossiper.

"The judgment of your friend Mr Pepperal, I presume!" with a sneer, said the stranger.

"No, sir—from much better."

"Leave the gentleman to his opinion," cried Pepperal, turning towards Gossiper, with a look that seemed intended to awe his adversary into silence—"the author need be obliged to no man for discovering him."

Pen, who was never yet in society without contributing to the conversation, here asked Mr Pepperal in what the demerits of the work, which he had taken up upon Gossiper's laying it down, consisted.

"What, sir!" answered Pepperal, with an air of surprise, evidently occasioned by the free and easy air of the interrogator—"what should they consist in?"

"I mean, sir," replied Pen, "is it the style or the matter that you condemn?"

"Both, sir!" bluntly exclaimed the other.

"And yet the few sentences I have read I should rather be disposed to approve."

"You approve!" cried Pepperal, with an expression that really evinced surprise.

"Yes, sir. There is a purity of diction, a turn of expression, an unaffected"——

"Balderdash!"

"What, sir?"

"I say, sir—I affirm, it is trash; trash, from the beginning to the end."

"Your criticism, sir," said Pen, smiling, "is rather of a sweeping nature."

"His criticisms generally are so, sir," observed the stranger, as he very coolly turned his eye from the paper to Pen Owen.

"I understand you, Mr Duster," said Pepperal fiercely.

"I have the advantage, then, of those authors who generally fall under your lash."

"You may feel it yourself some day, sir."

"I should be sorry to escape it, sir."

"You may depend upon it, sir."

"I do, as an earnest of success, Mr Pepperal."

Pen, who felt that he had occasioned this war of words, which his ignorance of the world induced him to believe might end in a war of a more serious nature, here interfered, and regretted that any observation of his should have occasioned so warm a discussion. "I assure you, sir," addressing Pepperal, "I merely asked for information."

"Most people ask for what they are most in need of, sir," snarled the critic.

"Repeat that again!" cried the grand pacificator Pen, starting from his seat.

"That's not fair, sir," said Mr Duster, quietly placing his hand upon Pen's arm—"Mr Pepperal is rarely called upon to repeat his good things."

"But, sir, he means to insult me."

"Not by his contempt, I assure you."

"His contempt!"

"If you were an author, sir, you would find it to be the first step towards distinction."

"I tell you what, Mr Duster," cried Pepperal, now turning all his spleen upon that gentleman, "if you were not beneath criticism, I would"——

"You," interrupted Duster, "would render me so by taking me by the hand."

"I—I—I'd take the devil by the hand first, sir."

"Nay," (turning again to his newspaper,) said Duster, "you grow scurrilous, and are in a writing mood. I'll interrupt you no further."

"I'll tell you what, Mr Duster," cried the enraged critic,—"I"——

"You must rather," said Pen, "tell me, sir, what you meant by the language"——

"For Heaven's sake, sir," cried the provoking Duster, "if, as your appearance bespeaks you, you are a gentleman, do not risk a public quarrel with Mr Pepperal."

"Risk a quarrel! Do you imagine, sir, I will suffer any man to play upon me with impunity?"

"See, sir, you have escaped an injury, whilst, I can assure you, you have received no insult," pointing to Pepperal, who, with a hurried air, was making the best of his way through the front

shop. Pen would have pursued him ; but Duster entreated him to be patient ; and, having prevailed upon him to sit down, expressed his surprise that he should not know to whom he had been addressing himself. Pen professed himself to be a perfect stranger in London.

"That man, sir," said Mr Duster, "is the editor of a Review, and an oracle among a certain class of people. He was originally apprenticed to a bookseller in the west, who, finding that he read more books than he sold, discharged him at the end of his term, with the character of being a learned dunce ; for though he had emptied the miscellaneous library of his employer into his head, not a single sentence had ever escaped his lips, to prove it had been digested. He next became the merry-andrew of a strolling mountebank ; but his stock of wit being exhausted before the close of the first campaign, he was returned upon the world, as a candidate for any portion of its favour it might be disposed to grant. After experiencing for many years its vicissitudes, under a variety of forms, he settled as a surgeon in Lancashire, where, by some unaccountable accident, he appeared to have rescued a man of fortune and influence in the neighbourhood from the jaws of death :—one of those kind coincidences of Dame Nature in favour of this quack, which may be considered as a counterbalance to the inattention she had shown towards Pepperal on all other occasions. The gentleman, to evince his gratitude, interested himself in his fortunes ; and disposing of the few bottles of coloured water, and the ordinary drugs of which his establishment consisted, Pepperal brought his library in his head, and two shirts in his pocket-handkerchief, up to town, to try his fortune under the sanction of his patron. With so respectable an introduction, he made acquaintance with some literary characters ; and being thrown into the society of certain daily and weekly scribblers, whose stock in trade he had wit enough to discover did not much exceed what he might fairly boast himself, he seriously turned his thoughts to the vocation as a future resource against starvation. He had read several treatises upon the subject, translated from the ancients and imported from the French ; and his first efforts were made (of course anonymously) in the magazines, and other of the abounding depositories of ephemeral trash and scandal. But the little smattering of information of which it had cost him so much labour to possess himself, was not sufficient to sustain him on a level even with these hebdomadal vehicles of amusement. He began to despair of success, when falling in with a veteran of the trade, he ascertained that modern criticism may be exercised without any one of those qualifications which are supposed to form its basis ; that to analyse a work is a mere

waste of time ; and that the only principle upon which its merit or demerit rests, (be it of a scientific, practical, didactic, or moral nature,) is to be found in the political principles of the author. This point being duly ascertained, the terms of approval or condemnation are to be sought in the best vocabulary of the vulgar tongue, and an arbitrary sentence is passed with all the solemnity of a juridical verdict. The process is completed by some general observations on the subject under discussion, revealed, perhaps, for the first time, by the unfortunate author himself, or aided by the ingenious practice of index hunting. This man, thus qualified, is now the editor of a popular Review, and is the dread and scourge of those who formerly held his talents in such utter contempt, that they would have laughed in his face had he ventured an opinion upon any literary subject in their presence."

"Upon my word, sir," said Pen, "you surprise me. I considered the art of criticism to have been one of the noblest"—

"And, like every thing noble and excellent, subject, in due proportion, to be travestied and rendered ridiculous. I know this man well, sir. He speaks just what he has picked up in the last book, or last conversation he has been engaged in. You may know where he was yesterday by the flavour of his observations to-day. His jokes, when he adventures upon one, are spoiled proverbs ; and his wit, when he attempts it, is the mere art of covering what is threadbare with a woof of his own manufacture, that betrays the *botch*."

"A man of this sort surely, sir," said Pen Owen, "must be scouted from decent society."

"So far from it, sir, he is courted, and dined, and lionized from house to house, among the great and little great."

"Amazing!" exclaimed Pen, "that a man who could not procure a dinner by his own wit, should revel in luxury and fame by decrying the wit of others."

"You are, by your acknowledgment, sir," replied Mr Duster, "fresh on the town ; and I have no doubt, when you are better acquainted with what is going forward, your present amazement will be attenuated by being spread over a larger surface, until at last you will learn to be astonished at nothing in this great world."

At this moment two or three new comers approached the table, who all saluted Mr Duster as an old acquaintance. A gentleman of the party taking up the pamphlet, already an object of so much discussion, asked one of his companions if he had read it.

"Excellent!" answered he : "I could not leave it after I had read the first two or three pages. I hear it is —'s."

"It might be his, indeed, if we were to judge from the display of political knowledge and official information"——

"And its wit—the true genuine Attic turn—here! give it me. I think this is one of the happiest instances of the *vis comica* I ever met with," reading aloud an extract from the work.

"Still," said the third gentleman, who had not yet spoken, "I doubt the correctness of your suspicions."

Pen began to anticipate a new battle of bookworms, and was rising from his seat, when Mr Duster, gently touching his arm, invited him to sit down again, with a smile and a flush of countenance which bespoke some actual pleasure, or pleasure about to offer itself.

"Indeed," answered the speaker who held the book, "I think I cannot be mistaken."

"Indeed," retorted the other laughing, "but you are. Is he *not*, Mr Duster?"

Duster evidently wished to look more confused than he did; but the reference did not appear to interrupt the pamphlet-reader, who seemed again struck by some new beauty, which he pointed out to his companion, so that Mr Duster's confusion was lost upon part of the company. Whether it was with a view to clear himself from the implied charge, or whether he had any other motive, the reader will hereafter learn; but Mr Duster was the first to break silence, after the delighted critic had closed the book, with some very hearty general commendations.

"Nay, nay, my dear sir," applying himself to his accuser with as confused an air as he could call up, "it is not fair, it is not indeed, to charge any nonsensical publication that attracts public attention upon"——

"My good friend," observed the other, "this is a publication any man in the country may be proud of."

"My dear sir, you confuse me," stammered Mr Duster, labouring to give countenance to his words.

"Is it really so?" asked the critic, turning to his companion, in a whisper.

"Positively," affirmed the other.

"You really are too bad," said Mr Duster, rising from his seat and hurrying into the shop, as if to make his escape; "you are not to be trusted. I mean—— good morning, gentlemen. Good morning, sir," turning towards Pen, who, struck by the novelty of the scene, arose also to take his departure.

CHAPTER XIX.

PEN OWEN returned to his lodgings, musing upon the scenes he had just witnessed ; and beginning to perceive some of the inconveniences of authorship, again revolved in his mind the several plans which had presented themselves to his adoption. These were soon interrupted by visions respecting Ellice Craig, and the mystery in which her fate still appeared to be enveloped ; when his servant, entering, asked him whether he intended to dress. He recollected, for the first time, his engagement with Major Irwin, and looking at his watch, hastily equipped himself, and proceeded to the coffee-house named by that gentleman. He found him in waiting ; and dinner being set upon table, was despatched, and cleared away in the regular order of things. After some preliminary conversation, in the course of which Pen Owen had completely laid open the state of his affairs, his companion asked him in what manner he proposed to establish himself, and whether the most prudent plan would not be, to return to his uncle, and come to an explanation with him.

"What ! sir," exclaimed Pen, "and sue for pardon, when I acknowledge no guilt ?"

"He is your uncle and your friend—a kind and indulgent one, by your account."

"The best, the kindest being that ever existed, sir," cried Pen.

"Then, surely some concession on your part"—

"What ! when I need his assistance ?"

"It is generally the moment," said the major, smiling, "when a true friend is most needful."

"And would you have me, sir, basely truckle to him for assistance, and sacrifice my independence ?"

"Independence, my young friend, (if you will honour me by allowing me to call you so,) is a vague term. It is sometimes adopted to cover selfish and morose feelings ; sometimes to get rid of troublesome monitors ; sometimes to break up the very foundations of society."

"It has no such construction with me," said Pen : "it simply points to that innate feeling of an honourable mind, which scorns to accept favours at the expense of principle, and would rather starve than do that from an interested motive which it refuses to do voluntarily."

"I like your definition," said the major, "better than any of my own ; but, my good sir, you talk of starving, as a coffee-house politician talks of a military campaign : you have no conception of the thing itself."

"I can conceive it," said Pen, smiling, but not with his usual animation.

"I have felt it!" sighed the major.

"Indeed!"

"Yes, indeed; and I can assure you it is an alternative which independence itself would shudder at."

"How can this have been, sir?" asked Pen.

"I am a soldier, and a soldier of fortune, Mr Owen," answered the major: "like you, I had to make my own way—like you, I boasted my independence."

"And it has gloriously carried you through all difficulties!" exclaimed Pen, who thought himself victorious in the argument, as he viewed his companion.

"You are not to judge of a play or a novel by reading the last pages, or seeing the last act. The cunning or talent of an author may, to please his patrons, wind up all difficulties by making his hero happy at last, as they call it; but the catastrophe in real life is not so easily brought about. Were you acquainted with my history, it would not hold out a very tempting example to your adoption, Mr Owen."

"I would be content, nevertheless, if I were sure of"—

"Sure of what?" asked the major.

"Of being so happy and good a man as you appear to be."

"You did well to say *appear*, my dear sir!" sighed the major.

"I have been called an impudent fellow," said Pen smiling, "often and often by my dear good uncle; but I have not impudence enough—to"—

"To do what?" asked the major.

"To ask to be admitted to your confidence: you say you were once thrown upon the world like myself: I feel satisfied that your advice"—

"You would know my history, in short," said the major.

"That's the very point."

"I can have no other objection to give it, my dear sir, than the fear of tiring you: it is told, indeed, in a few words."

"The objection cannot be valid, I swear," cried Pen, with all the eagerness of youthful curiosity. The major sighed, and, resting his head upon his hands, seemed to be recollecting himself for a few moments, when, lifting his eye to our hero's countenance, he saw it distorted by a most extraordinary expression, arising evidently from a note he was perusing, and which the waiter had put into his hand whilst the major had been collecting the materials for his history.

"Who gave you this?" demanded Pen of the waiter.

"A ticket-porter brought it this moment to the bar."

"And how did you know me?"

"The man pointed you out to me, sir."

"Where is he?"

"He can scarcely have left the door, sir."

Pen seized his hat, and rushed into the street; but finding a host of men instead of an individual, and having no clear idea in his mind of the costume of a ticket-porter, he ran forward, looking and asking for what no single individual could understand or answer. He had threaded several of the crowded streets in the neighbourhood of St James's, and had some confused notion that he was directing his pursuit correctly as long as he had some one to push aside or outstrip; but at length finding himself in an unfrequented street, where no one appeared to oppose his march, he began to reflect upon the inutility and folly of his pursuit.

He had scarcely been out of his lodgings after dusk since his residence in London, having never dined from home; and being generally sufficiently exercised during his morning perambulations, he had not any disposition to nocturnal rambles.

He was at a loss how to proceed, or even to return to the major, whom he had so abruptly left in the coffee-room. He stopped just under the light of a lamp to reperuse the note, lest any thing should have escaped his notice. It ran in these words:—

"Beware, young man, of the connexion you are forming, lest you become the victim of an adventurer, whose character is too well known to endanger any but a novice in the ways of this vile town. One who has embarked her whole hope of future happiness in your affection warns, although she dare not appear to ward off the danger." It appeared certainly to be a female hand; and what other female could Pen dream of but Ellice Craig? Was it her hand? He was not collected enough to judge critically; but he thought it not unlike it. It might be disguised; and with this allowance, he felt convinced that the major was an impostor, and that his Ellice was near him.

"It must be she," he said aloud, as he closed the note to put it in his pocket. "It is," said a female voice close to his ear: "follow, and be silent." Pen was struck mute. He had nearly taken a decent-looking woman of forty for his Ellice; but obeying the voice like a child, or as if numbed by the approach of something supernatural, he followed his conductor without hesitation. They had not advanced far when the woman, ascending the steps of a respectable-looking house, and opening the door softly, motioned to Pen Owen to enter. He unhesitatingly obeyed; and before he had time to reflect upon what he was doing, found himself in an elegant, well-furnished drawing-room. He was left for nearly a quarter of an hour to collect his scat-

tered thoughts, which, however, only supplied him with some vague undefined ideas that Ellice Craig would certainly appear before him.

He heard voices whispering in the adjoining room, which was only separated by large folding doors, and the handle of one of these was evidently turning for the admission of some person, who appeared unwilling to enter. Pen stood like a statue, with his eyes fixed on the lock. He heard distinctly the words, "I cannot, will not see him," when a thundering knock at the street door was followed by a slight scream from the inner room, and a rush up the staircase adjoining. The intervening door was thrown open, and his former conductor, seizing him by the arm, entreated him for Heaven's sake to be silent and obey her. He would have remonstrated, but the woman's countenance spoke the agony of her fears; and he suffered himself to be hurried forward into the adjoining room. She threw open the folding doors of a large French buhl cabinet, and pushing him in, secured it on the outside. This skilful manœuvre was scarcely executed when a heavy step on the stair was heard, and the master of the house evidently entered the front drawing-room, the doors of which were still standing open.

"Where is Miss Irwin?" asked the gentleman.

"She is not well, sir," answered the same woman who had hitherto acted the principal part in the drama.

"Heavens! not well; why, she was well when I left home."

"Yes, sir, but she found herself suddenly seized after dinner."

"Not seriously?"

"Oh dear no, major, only a little faintish or so; so she thought it better to go to bed early."

"Early indeed!"

"Yes, you are early, major; it is but just nine, and you wasn't expected home till eleven."

"It was not my intention. Desire Morton to bring up my dressing-gown."

"There's a fire in your own room, major."

"I choose to have my things here, since my daughter is gone to bed."

"Morton is not at home, major."

"Not at home; how's that?"

"As you were not expected so early, my mistress allowed him to step out."

"Psha! she, poor soul, spoils you all. Desire Thomas to bring my things up then."

"He is just stepped out with a note."

"A note! to whom?"

"I forget, sir."

"Forget! why you seem crazy to-night, Bridget."

"Oh, now I think of it, it was to the milliner's in Bond Street."

"Nonsense; why could not she have waited till morning? However, women will be women still, good Bridget, and there's an end of it. Reach me that book; and send Morton up when he returns."

The good woman retired, but not without first passing through the back room, and pressing on the buhl cabinet, to ascertain that all was safe there.

The situation of Pen Owen may be more easily conceived than described. Pent up with docketed papers and parchments—India shawls and pelisses hanging round his narrow abode—he could scarcely breathe, and would unquestionably have sallied forth and cleared up the mistake, had he not felt that he should, though he knew not how, involve the character of the major's daughter, or some other female in his house, who was evidently engaged in a clandestine arrangement.

He had ample time for reflection, and could not but be surprised at the strange coincidence which had brought the major and himself again into such close contact. Probably it was a design: he had been decoyed into the snare of which the note warned him; and yet, how could he have been drawn to the very spot? He recollected that one of the persons he had fixed on had certainly run in that direction, and that he had only lost sight of him as he entered the street. I say he recollected, because he had overtaken more than one runner, and found himself mistaken in his man; and then hurried on to a new pursuit: the last instance, however, recurred to his mind only at this moment.

Still, the major made no enquiries that argued a previous design; and, further, he was evidently the dupe of some domestic intrigue.

He listened, in the hope that the major, like the heroes of romance or the buskin, might reason aloud, and let his purpose out; but the major quietly perused his book, except indeed, on one occasion, when throwing it from him, he walked up and down the room, and stood for some moments absorbed in thought, just opposite the cabinet, within six inches of poor Pen's nose. Pen, than whom no one of his years had a quicker perception of the ridiculous, was scarcely able to retain a laugh at their relative position, when the door of the other drawing-room opening, he heard the major's valet present himself for orders.

"Shut the door, Morton," said his master.

This was the outer door. The major then put several questions to his man, the purport of which Pen could not exactly

distinguish, but caught sufficient to convince him that he had been set to watch the motions of some particular person. At length he heard the major say, in a more distinct tone of voice, "Morton, something decisive must be done with him: we must get him into our power, if he attempt"——

"That's easy enough, sir: I saw him lurking about the house this very evening."

"How!"

"Indeed I did, sir; he was reading a note under a lamp."

Pen started; could it be himself that was meant? His surprise prevented his hearing the whole of the major's observation; but he caught the closing words: "Surely my daughter could never have warranted this."

"Did he see you?" asked the major, after a pause.

"No, sir; I took care of that."

"Which way did he retreat?"

"That I could not perceive: he vanished in a moment. I should have thought"——

"Thought what, Morton?"

"If it had been possible, that he was admitted into this house."

"Hey, what!" cried the major, starting from his seat.

"Nay, sir, it could not be."

"I don't know that, Morton: I have had my suspicions: my daughter's sudden illness to-night makes me suspect something. Bridget appeared confused, too, on my unexpected arrival: surely —— Look into that room, Morton."

Pen trembled, not from any personal apprehension, but from the dread of being exposed in a situation so degrading, and rendered the more embarrassing by his having submitted to it so long.

The servant laid his hand upon the lock of the cabinet as he passed into a third apartment, but the key having been withdrawn by the cautious abigail, he did not stop to examine it. He found nothing to excite suspicion; and returning to his master, who continued pacing the room, the conversation ceased.

The major prepared to go to rest; but seeming to recollect something, he returned, and calling Morton to him, said, in a low tone of voice, "You alone must be my confidant; you are acquainted with every thing; you must yourself watch him; you know his lodgings; never lose sight of him. Is he acquainted with your person?"

The servant answered in the negative, "I am certain he is not."

"That's well," returned the major; and the coast, after a

short period, was left clear—but not open to poor Pen, whose contending feelings, having so small a space for vent, had nearly overpowered his discretion, and induced him to burst upon the conspirators, who, he entertained not a doubt, had some design upon him, but of what nature, or on what account, he had no possible means of conjecturing.

The intention of the major, thus accidentally betrayed to him, fully confirmed the caution given in the note he had received in the coffee-room; and he thanked his good fortune, that had hurried him off in pursuit of the messenger, instead of showing the note to the major, which, with the natural impetuosity of his character, he most assuredly would have done. He had searched in vain for any loophole which might enable him to ascertain the person of Morton, which it was now become important he should know; but, unfortunately, the cabinet, which had been plundered from some of the royal palaces of France, had been newly fitted up, and was in a state of perfect order, and free from all dilapidation.

Whilst his mind had such food for reflection, he remained as patiently as he could, although fatigued beyond measure by the awkwardness of his position, which the fear of being discovered prevented his improving during the whole of the domestic dialogue he had just overheard. The deep silence that followed, broken only by the occasional knell of a watchman's voice, emboldened him to place his right leg in the position previously occupied by his left.

This important change reconciled him for a few minutes to his protracted imprisonment; but after having heard the silver chimes of a French clock, which corresponded with the cabinet, and was placed just over his head, mellifluously record the lapse of six succeeding quarters, he began most seriously to deliberate the possible means of escaping, without the risk of being seized as a housebreaker. At length, however, he heard the approach of a light step, succeeded by an application of a key to the door of his prison-house.

"Hist, hist," whispered a female voice, which was a sufficient signal for poor Pen to bolt out. "Hush, hush," the same voice repeated, whilst utter darkness prevailed; and surrendering his hand, which was immediately seized, he followed, in breathless anxiety, his conductress. She led him down the stairs, which creaked most abominably under the double weight, and occasioned no trifling trepidation to the trembling guide.

Passing on tiptoe along the hall, they came to the street-door, the bolts of which seemed to set her strength at defiance. Pen followed the direction of her hand, and pulled it back with such violence, that the house re-echoed with the sound. "Hea-

ven and earth!" exclaimed the woman, "what have you done?" A light flashed upon the stairs: Pen could now almost distinguish his danger: and wrenching open the door, was in a few minutes as many hundred paces from it in an adjoining street.

What was to be done now, occasioned him but little comparative concern; and yet he knew not where he was, and felt the hazard of applying to any chance passenger, or the watch, for information. He walked on, however, at a brisk rate, till feeling himself, as he supposed, safe from pursuit, he ventured to ask the way to Bury Street, where, after the adventures of the night, he was at length truly happy to find himself.

It may be supposed that he had subject-matter enough to occupy his waking thoughts, which, nevertheless, aided by a strong and youthful constitution, soon became actual dreams; so that, when he awoke in the morning, he found it difficult to separate the reality from the fanciful accompaniments with which they had been decked out by the drowsy deity—who seems to have opened his twofold gates of ivory, as well as horn!

He re-perused the note which had involved him in so much perplexity, hoping, no doubt, that the sun might throw more light upon it than the meaner satellites of the preceding evening: and he arrived at the conclusion, much against his will, that the hand-writing, though apparently of the feminine gender, was *not* at all—making every allowance for presumed disguise—like that of Ellice Craig, which was, of course, as familiar to him as his own.

Who then could it come from? Here every surmise, and every shadow of surmise, was cut off. The former part, being admonitory, might, indeed, come either from an enemy to the major, or from a friend to unprotected youth. But what woman could be interested in his fate, unless it were Ellice herself? And yet, would she employ another person to rescue him from danger, when a word or a line from herself would have effectually saved him? Besides, where could she be concealed? How could she be acquainted with his movements? Why not, if at liberty to communicate with him, dissolve the mystery which enveloped her, and which could not possibly be voluntary?

At one moment he resolved to come to an explanation with the major; but the suspicious conduct he had witnessed, so confirmatory of the warning given in the note, determined him to have no further communication with him. He had no longer any doubt that the title of Black Jack had been bestowed upon him by the lower classes from some knowledge of his previous life, and that he had his reasons for holding himself aloof from general society.

The consequence of all this deep reasoning was a resort to his old expedient of advertisements, clothed under all forms, enigmatical and anagrammatical, which sometimes surprise a reader of the fashionable London journals.

Having dispatched his servant, and lightened this part of the burden under which he was doomed to labour, he determined to revisit the bookseller's shop in which he had been the day before, and to ascertain, from that person, the best mode of employing his talents, so that they might no longer lie "hid under a bushel." To suffer them to remain barren, or even fallow, whilst capable of producing an immediate crop to supply his wants, was out of the question. Accordingly, after having looked over the papers in the back shop, he accosted Mr Duodec, and desired a private conference. He was immediately ushered into the sanctum of this Mæcenæ, who, placing a chair for his visiter, sat himself down opposite to him.

Pen came to the point at once. "Sir," said he, "I wish to turn my talents to account."

"A very natural resolution, sir," observed Duodec, smiling.

"And I wish to learn from you in what line they can be best and most profitably employed."

"Really, sir," answered the bookseller, "that is a question which seldom comes before me. I am rarely consulted before an author has made up his mind as to his particular line."

"My dear sir," cried Pen, "I have no particular line. 'It is a matter of indifference upon what fund I draw for my materials.'"

"Indeed!—why then, sir, you must be an universal genius."

"Not that—not that—but I have many resources that"—

"Are you of Oxford or Cambridge, sir?"

"Neither," answered Pen, with an air of confidence.

"Really—some public school, I presume?"

"None, sir; my education has been of a more general nature than any of the old methods can supply."

"Humph—then I presume you are of the new school?"

"The world is my school, sir."

"That's a public one, you will admit," observed Duodec, smiling: "you have, then, travelled?"

"Never."

"You have been engaged in public business?"

"Never."

"I would not ask impertinent questions," said the bookseller, "but may I request to know where you have studied the world to be so well acquainted with it?"

"In books, sir."

"Books!—it does not become me to speak disparagingly of books, but"—

"But what, sir?"

"Books afford but little insight into the business of the world."

"I have no concern with the business of the world," answered Pen.

"Then, sir, may I request to know what business you have with me?"

"To have your opinion upon the nature of a work I meditate."

"This is to the point—what is the nature of it?"

"That I want you to tell *me*."

"Sir!" exclaimed the bookseller, drawing back his chair.

"I wish to know," proceeded Pen, "what sort of subject; in short, I want to make money; having been thrown out by some family disputes, I must turn my talents to account."

"Really, sir," said Duodec, in a more serious, I might add, more lofty tone, "I can be of very little assistance to you in that way."

"Are you not a publisher?"

"True, sir."

"And do you not purchase the works of living authors?"

"Most assuredly."

"Then how is it out of your way to tell me what subject is best suited to your purpose?"

"Because, sir, in a few words, I am not called upon to furnish the raw material, and to pay for the manufacture afterwards."

"Raw material!" exclaimed Pen.

"To be sure; if I supply the subject, where's the merit of writing?"

"Merit!—why, where lies the merit, if *not* in the writing?"

"Whist! I have twenty men employed at this moment, at seven shillings a sheet, in turning old books into new."

"You speak in enigmas, Mr Duodec—past my comprehension altogether—old books into new!"

"To be sure—a wiser man than either you or myself said, some thousand years ago, that there was nothing new under the sun; and it is not likely we should have discovered new mines since."

"This may be true, with restrictions, but still—still"——

"Why," interrupted the bookseller, "what authors stole and presented to our grandfathers, are, by a little careening, rendered just as good as new; and that's the secret."

"But, sir, I flatter myself"——

"You do indeed, sir, if you expect to do any thing without

having discovered the bent of your own talent. If you merely want employment, and are contented to drudge at seven shillings a sheet, I'll not refuse to"——

"D——n Mr What's-your-name!" cried Pen, starting from his chair; "I have a mind to kick you out of your own shop."

"Heyday! Mr Would-be-author, what's this? would you dare"——

"Dare—I dare do more than you suspect, you impudent"——

"Help, help," cried out Duodec, in a stentorian voice, which brought several gentlemen customers, as well as the shopmen, to his aid; "here's a sturdy beggar," exclaimed he, as soon as he had formed the phalanx round his body, "who wants to brain me, because I won't purchase talents that lie in the moon!"

"Silence, thou reptile!" cried Pen, with increasing rage: "I will expose your insolence to the world."

"Why, confound the fellow," vociferated the man of books, "he knows no more of the world than the babes in the wood: I can't guess what all this uproar's about: for my part, I don't know what business he has in my shop—I'll swear the peace against him."

"Pray, pray, gentlemen," said a bystander, "be cool, here is some misunderstanding, no doubt." Then turning to Pen, "Really, sir, here is something to be set right: Mr Duodec, I can assure you"——

"Is a most impudent"——

"Nay, my dear sir," interrupted the good-natured mediator, standing between the enraged parties, "allow me to interfere."

"Why, sir," exclaimed Pen, still endeavouring to approach the bookseller, "this scoundrel had the audacity to offer me seven shillings a-sheet."

"I offered no such thing, mark that: I offered no such thing," roared the enraged Duodec: "I only yielded to his necessities."

"My necessities, scoundrel!" retorted Pen.

"It is evident, sir," said the mediator, "that there is an error."

"No error," bawled the bookseller, who could now parley in security; "he told me he wanted to make money by his wits."

"Silence, prithee, Mr Duodec; you only make matters worse," cried the gentleman.

"Worse! what care I—am I to be nosed by a needy dependant?"

"A dependant!" roared Pen.

"Ay, a pennyless fellow, that does not know what to write about."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen! this is not to be borne: I will make an example of the puppy." So saying, our hero darted

forward, and would certainly have carried his threat into execution, if the poor man had not made good his retreat, rallying, however, at every step, and disputing, like a skilful general, every inch of ground, without risking a close action.

"He shall pay for this, I promise him!" (Retreat sounded.)—"He shall not get off so cheaply, be assured!" (March.)—"An impudent"—(quick time, on perceiving the enemy advance,) until having reached the top of the stairs, which commanded a view of the whole field of battle, he strained his lungs in commanding his household troops to send for half a dozen constables as allies.

The gentleman who had stepped forward to prevent any actual mischief, now drew Pen Owen aside, and prevailed upon him to leave the shop. He allowed himself to be thus gently drawn along by one arm, whilst the other was elevated in a menacing flourish towards the offending bookseller; and had they been left alone to their own inventions, there is little doubt but we should have to record a second battle of the books, if not with equal spirit, at least with more fatal consequences to the parties themselves.

Mr Motley, for that was the stranger gentleman's name, now proceeded to enquire of Pen what had been the occasion of this grand *fracas*, endeavouring to turn it off in so humorous a manner, that Pen himself began to think that he had made rather a ridiculous figure. Nevertheless, he could not forgive the audacious trader, who, even in the forgetfulness of wrath, had dared to call the *HERR* of all the *OWENS* a dependant—the most unfortunate designation that Mr Duodec could have hit upon, unless his design had been to wound his adversary in the most vulnerable part.

As the clouds dispersed, however, Pen, who was naturally good-tempered, began to see things as they were, and to feel the real obligation he owed to Mr Motley for his interference. They continued to lounge through the streets; and as a common topic was afforded by the late scene, it was pursued with every disposition on the part of his new acquaintance to afford Pen whatever information he desired. Among other things, our hero mentioned what had passed on the same spot the preceding day, and spoke of Mr Duster as an author whose acquaintance he felt disposed to cultivate. Mr Motley shrugged up his shoulders, and observed, that Mr Duster was a curious character.

"Most men of genius are," added Pen.

"That appears to be rather begging the question, even if your general position be correct; for there are many shades of opinion respecting Mr Duster's abilities."

"Surely, sir, the pamphlet in question"——

"Is as much his as yours, my dear sir."

"Why, sir, he did not even deny it."

"Nay, he intended to confess it."

"What can you mean, sir?" demanded Pen, staring his new ally in the face.

"Neither more nor less, than that Duster is one of those waiters upon the Muses, who is disposed to pick up every '*unregarded trifle*' that drops under the table, and put it in his pocket for future use."

"I confess I am still too dull to comprehend you."

"He is, my dear sir," continued Motley, "so charitably given, that he is ready to adopt every literary bantling that has any thing to recommend it—if the father be so unnatural as not to claim it."

"What! father other men's works?"

"Even so; there is not a pamphlet, a novel, a squib even, given to the world anonymously, that Duster does not blush some unfortunate dupe into the belief of being his."

"Why, this," cried Pen, laughing aloud, "is a new species of larceny."

"And succeeds so well, that Duster has obtained a character for talent which it is difficult to disprove; and, therefore, few take the trouble to examine. It is said, indeed, and I believe with truth, that the only works he has never been induced to father—are his own."

"And how dared he provoke such an enemy as the critic Pepperal?"

"Because Pepperal is a receiver of stolen goods, as well as himself; and before he turned critic, had established his reputation upon a pamphlet written by a leader of the Opposition, who, he knew, dared not own it."

"Well, sir," said Pen, "we live to learn. I could not have conceived such a character yesterday."

"And you may make as curious discoveries to-morrow. I perceive every thing is new to you here, sir," observed Motley.

Pen immediately let him into his whole history, as if he were unbosoming himself to a friend of his childhood, whom he had just recovered after a long absence. In the midst of this conversation, the two gentlemen were met by Major Irwin, who coming up to them bowed slightly to Mr Motley, but with much cordiality would have shaken Pen by the hand, which he, however, coldly withdrew, wished him good morning, and passed on.

"You know Major Irwin?" observed Motley.

"Do *you*, sir?" quickly demanded Pen.

"But little—he's a shy man, and"——

"And what?" asked Pen.

"Not very popular."

"Do you know any thing against him?" demanded Pen.

"The question is a curious one to a stranger, sir."

"It is; but it is important to *me*."

"You appear, sir, to know him better than I do, although, by your manner, it seems you wish to know him less."

"I am deeply interested in knowing what he really is."

"He is a nabob, I believe."

"I mean his character."

"That of most nabobs, I fancy—rich and proud."

"His morals?"

"Those we do not trouble ourselves much about, in this great town, sir."

"Indeed! is it then a matter of indifference whether a man be religious or reprobate, virtuous or profligate?"

"You will excuse me, my dear sir, but I can hardly help smiling at your inexperience: religion is a man's own private concern, with which the world hath nothing to do: his virtue is mere abstinence from vice; and, as long as he guards the limit, why, what on earth have you or I to do with the question?"

"How, sir?—are breaches of duty, of religion and morality, openly tolerated in society?"

"Oh, by no means!" replied Motley; "but our criterion is not bottomed on abstract principles."

"Religion and morality abstract principles, sir!"

"What are they else, my good sir? Would you have us go to the minister and churchwardens for a certificate of a man's attendance at church, or to the Tabernacle, to ascertain whether he is a Methodist?"

"This does not appear necessary to"——

"Not necessary—to be sure not. If a man cog a die or shift a card, indeed, he is justly scouted"——

"Or calumniates his neighbour, seduces his friend's wife," cried Pen, finishing Motley's catalogue.

"Whoop! not a bit of it. What are our courts of justice and our courts of honour open for, think ye, if we are to trouble ourselves to take down evidence, where the offence is not cognizable? The world has a better criterion whereby to judge of a man."

"Pray, sir—you perceive my ignorance—what may this be?"

"His credit."

"This must be founded, I presume, on his character."

"——His character for choice wine, and a good cook."

"This!—the criterion of morals!"

"Why not ; it is simple, and every man is capable of forming his judgment from it."

"I see now, sir, you are bantering me," said Pen, with good humour.

"Upon my soul, sir," replied Motley, "I am not : how do you imagine the test of religion or morality, as you call them, could be applied to the population of this huge town ?"

"And pray, sir, have you no better test of public virtue than of private morals ?"

"Of public character, indeed, the criterion is different."

"And what may that be ?" asked Pen.

"Consistency."

"Consistency is a collateral testimony, but not a direct proof of principle."

"Principle, my dear sir ; what has principle to do with the question ? If a man has once attached himself to a party in the state, his character is dependent upon his rigid adherence to it."

"Whether he approve or condemn its conduct ?" asked Pen.

"What choice has he of approval or condemnation, when he is identified with it ? Is a man to desert his wife, when he has taken her for 'better or worse,' as I think the thing runs ?"

"It appears to me, sir," observed Pen, with rather a contemptuous smile, "according to your definition of private morals, that such desertion would not be considered very heinous by a jury of husbands."

"Perhaps not ; but the case is different : public character stands upon higher ground."

"Upon my soul, sir," cried Pen, "I can see no ground for public virtue to gain a footing upon, since you have no foundation for private morals."

"Public virtue ! good Heaven ! sir, you'll be taken for a Goth, and have your day with the Persian ambassador, and the Arctic diver. Who ever talked of public virtue ? It is of public character I speak."

"What !"

"New wonders, sir : London is full of them. I would advise you to take boat there, (for they had walked as far as Palace-yard,) and begin with the lions in the Tower. I must attend a committee above stairs ; and so, good-morning. To the Tower ! to the Tower ! sir," continued the gentleman, with a theatrical air, as he ascended the stairs to the committee-room.

"What !" exclaimed Pen aloud ; for it was an unfortunate habit of his, to give audible vent to any extraordinary or ardent feeling of his mind : "What !—a member of Parliament !"

"At your service, sir," answered a grave-looking gentleman, who supposed himself to have been addressed by Pen, "and will

admit you with pleasure." Our hero was taken by surprise; but the courtesy of the gentleman was so marked, that he did not correct the mistake; and, accepting the proposition, soon found himself seated in the august assembly of the representatives of the British empire.

CHAPTER XX.

PEN OWEN was struck with the novelty of his situation, and very soon forgot all that had offended and surprised him in the novel and curious conversation which had so recently passed between him and Mr Motley. He found himself seated among several gentlemen who were provided with note-books, and all the necessary apparatus for taking down the approaching debate. Pen listened with due attention to all that passed among his neighbours in the gallery.

"We shall have hot work to-night," said one.

"Perhaps not. I hear it's a dead thing," answered his neighbour.

"Not so dead as you may imagine," observed a third; "Con-tretems means to press a division."

"What for?"

"Because he has a speech, cut and dry, for the occasion."

"I'll be d——d if I report a word of it, then," cried his neighbour. "I've no notion of being kept here, night after night, with these cursed coxcombs."

"Why, he's on your side, Toby," said a facetious neighbour, winking.

"I care for one side just as much as t'other," replied the first.

"But you must print him"——

"That's as I please."

"Nay—a partisan."

"I'll mar him, then, if he exceed half an hour."

"What a hand you made of Lord Zigzag last night!" said a little man, leaning across his neighbour, and addressing the last speaker: "he spoke three hours, and you gave him three lines."

"I had left him out altogether; but Overall came to the office, and insisted upon something."

"You made it up, however, in Browbeater's speech."

"Yes," replied the facetious one: "you gave him a column and a half, though he was not on his legs five minutes."

"How!" exclaimed the defendant, with some marks of surprise on his countenance—"not speak more than five minutes?"

"Not he: he was taken ill, you know."

"I did not know," retorted he, indignantly; "and some of you gentlemen might have taken the trouble of informing me, as you saw me leave the house before he rose to speak."

"What matters it?" cried the wag of the quorum: "you made a speech for him; and the world dares not dispute our word."

"Not I, by ——; he made it himself, and gave me his notes beforehand; and this is the return I get by rendering them into English."

"He forgot it, perhaps," observed his right-hand neighbour.

"Not he!" returned the offended reporter: "his only talent is learning by rote."

"A political parrot!" exclaimed one.

"*Pol! me occidisti*," quoth the wag.

Pen's ears appeared to him to be elongated in the progress of this dialogue; that is, they seemed to catch something of more extraordinary dimensions than they had been accustomed to receive, and to force their way in spite of his reason. Whether the reader may be induced to draw another inference from this figurative mode of illustration, I presume not to determine; and it depends much upon his being one of the initiated; but certainly our friend Pen would have been set down, by the present company, as of the breed famed for an excess in those parts, had he expressed any portion of the confusion created within his cerebral region, by the abrupt intrusion of this new matter into it.

The astonishment of our hero was not, however, destined to end so early in the evening. It was not from the temporary disappointment which he experienced on finding his preconceived notions of senatorial dignity all scattered and bewildered by the actual representation of the Exchange at Bristol, or the club at the White Lion, turned loose into a chapel of ease. It must be acknowledged, that his opinions of men and things, being formed we know not how, and, as it appeared from his cross-examination by Mr Duodec, he knew not where, had taken root in his mind, without much analysis, and without being at all brought to the test of experience.

As he ascended to the gallery of the House of Commons, he had prepared, in his mind's eye, the classical illustrations of the august assembly of conscript fathers. He might have dispensed with the consular fasces and the curule chairs; but he had certainly compounded for some equally appropriate illustrations and accompaniments of senatorial dignity. He never for a

moment doubted that something would strike upon his view, to impress him with the awe and majesty of a first introduction to the seat of imperial legislature.

Some excuse, therefore, may be alleged in his favour, when he beheld a desecrated chapel, occupied by some scores of persons, lounging, sitting, or lying at their length upon the benches, in muddy boots, slouched hats, silk handkerchiefs, and great-coats. This disappointment, which, luckily, was not expressed in audible terms, was, however, fairly overpowered by the revelation of the mysteries which reached his ears in the gallery; and when the business before the House was brought forward, he forgot both, in his deep attention to the several speakers who took a share in the early part of the discussion. In the progress of the debate, however, he saw his friend of the day, Mr. Motley, rise from his seat; and never did a country novice, with gaping mouth and open eyes, watch the movements of the first conjurer who had ever the honour to exhibit before him, with more tenseness of observation, than did our hero listen for the speech of this orator.

When he had time to recollect himself, after the first impression was a little worn off, he perceived that the House was all attention to this speaker, and caught the approving sound of some one behind him, who exclaimed in a whisper, "A clever fellow, sir!—a prodigious speaker!" "and a true lover of his country," emphatically returned a second voice. Pen did not turn to observe the persons, but could not avoid perceiving that two of his reporting neighbours sat with closed books during the speech, whilst three others were scribbling, as if they would wear their fingers to the bone. Mr Motley was fluent, had an excellent choice of words, and seemed to possess the talent of fixing upon the weak point of his opponents. Pen thought him an able orator, and lamented that he should be so far sunk in infamy, as to boast of all want of principle to an absolute stranger like himself.

In the midst of the reverie occasioned by these reflections, he was roused by the frequent exclamation of "Hear, hear!" which, as the eyes of several members were directed towards the gallery, Pen took for a particular demand upon *his* attention, and bent forward his head, in obedience to the injunction, to catch all that should fall from the honourable speaker.

"Sir," cried the vehement orator, addressing the chair, "I can scarcely believe that I am any longer a Briton, or that I am addressing myself to an assembly of free men, when I hear such measures proposed by a corrupt ministry, and hailed by their still more corrupt hirelings. (Hear, hear.) I say, corrupt hirelings; for by what mere perversion of intellect could man be

brought to support such measures? No, sir: they must be wholly lost to every sense of individual worth, and every principle of public virtue, before they could surrender themselves, bound hand and foot, to their employers. What are the wisest, the noblest, the most enlightened institutions among men? What is our boasted freedom, the purity of our laws, the excellence of our constitution, unless bottomed in the morality of the people, and in the sanction of a pure and holy religion? (Hear, hear.) Will the people respect our public establishments, if we, the pillars and support of them, betray a rottenness and corruption at the core?—a dereliction of principle—an abandonment of all for which our glorious ancestors toiled and bled, that must bring down the tottering edifice about our ears, and involve us and them in one universal destruction! Sir, I am warm upon the subject, because I feel it. Public virtue is the jewel, the palladium of the constitution—public morals the great, the first, the only impregnable bulwark against the world in arms against us. Perish fame, martial glory, foreign achievement! (Hear, hear.) Let but our honour and integrity survive, and we are as a rock in the ocean!" "Grand!" whispered one reporter. "Trash!" retorted another. "The right honourable gentlemen opposite (continued the orator) have marshalled before you their means of national defence—their squadrons, their armies, their fortifications, their barracks, and the great gun in St James's Park. (Loud laugh. Pen stared.) But I will tell you, sir—yes, sir, I will tell them, sir—that the true means of defence are not enumerated by them. No, sir, those means are not in their catalogue, sir. Those means, I would hope, are, however, to be found somewhere. (Hear, hear.) Yes, sir, they may be found in this House, at least on one side of the House. They are, sir, sound constitutional principles—that pure love of country which absorbs all the feelings of self, or selfish views—that divine morality which teaches the reciprocal duties of society, and gives a religious sentiments to the impulses of patriotism—which bids us prefer death to the sacrifice of a single principle." (Hear, hear, hear.)

"I'll be d——d if I do any longer!" exclaimed Pen, starting from his seat, supposing the appeal for attention and approbation to be made directly to himself.

"Order, order!" cried the Speaker, rising at the same moment.

"Order! chair!" repeated the members.

"Take him into custody," cried his neighbours.

"A maniac! a maniac!" was whispered all around him.

"Unhand me, sirs!" cried Pen, forcing his way up the seats to the doors of the gallery.

The deputy sergeant-at-arms met him at the bottom of the

stairs, and politely informed him that he was in custody by order of the Speaker.

Pen replied that "the Speaker was an unprincipled, hollow, insidious knave."

"Stop, stop, sir, for Heaven's sake," interrupted the officer, "let me advise you not to commit yourself further; you have already been guilty of a breach of privilege."

"Privilege, sir!" exclaimed Pen, "am I to sit still and listen to a fellow who told me within these two hours that public virtue was a farce, and public morals a nonentity, and not give him the lie in his teeth, when he boasts of his own love of virtue and reverence for religion?"

"My good sir," replied the officer, "you must be aware that no man is at liberty to interrupt the proceedings of the house, and that even the admission of strangers is by sufferance."

"Sufferance or no sufferance, sir, what is it to me? *I was there*: my ears were free to hear."

"But not your tongue to speak," said the sergeant good-humouredly, who really thought the young man deranged.

"My tongue not free, when I hear principles polluted by"——

"Sir! sir!" cried the officer, now beginning to be impatient at the protracted conversation, "you really are in a situation which requires sober consideration; if you are called before the House"——

"Shall I be called? Then I at least may use my tongue."

Major Irwin at this moment was passing through the lobby, and perceiving the situation of Pen, hastily enquired what was the matter. The sergeant informed him in a few words, when, taking our hero aside, he most earnestly entreated him to recollect himself, for that he was actually in custody, and the consequences of his persevering in his present conduct might be most serious and prejudicial.

"Major Irwin," answered Pen, "I know not by what authority you take upon you to interfere with my conduct, or meddle in my proceedings after what has passed"—— Here Pen checked himself, and the major demanded what he meant.

"Let your own conscience answer that, sir," fiercely replied our hero, when he was interrupted by the arrival of several members from the body of the house, who came up to Pen and the sergeant and enquired what had been the cause of the disturbance; telling the latter that the business of the house was at a stand until he should return with his report.

That officer, leaving Pen in charge, went to inform the Speaker that the offender was in custody, who was ordered immediately to appear at the bar. Several gentlemen now addressed Pen,

and recommended that he should acknowledge his error and ask pardon of the house, after which he would be dismissed. This advice our hero rejected with an air of contempt, which was intended to convey his fixed and determined resolution to be the keeper and supporter of his own independence. He was forthwith conducted to the bar of the house; and the whole scene and occasion of it recurred to his mind with redoubled force when he perceived Mr Motley still upon his legs, as if waiting to resume his patriotic philippic. The speaker addressed Pen Owen by name, (which the sergeant-at-arms had communicated to him,) and with much seriousness adverted to the high indecorum of which he had been guilty; but that, in consideration of the contrition he had expressed, the house, in its mercy, would, on his publicly professing—

“Contrition!” exclaimed Pen with as much vehemence as if he had been repelling a personal insult, “I never expressed, nor will express, contrition for what I consider to be an act of duty.”

“Chair! chair!” resounded from a hundred voices, and Pen was ordered from the bar. His committal to Newgate was immediately moved and carried; and in less than an hour Pen Owen found himself seated in a little room looking into the Old Bailey, in which, however, he was informed, he might enjoy every thing except his liberty.

He remained for a period highly elated at the glorious proof he had given of his independence, and viewed the grated ornaments of his window as martyrs are said to do the preparations for their canonization; but after a certain time, which is always in proportion to the elasticity which nature has given to the individual constitution, he began to reflect that abstractedly there was not likely to result much honour from having lodgings in Newgate. At the same time, he thought it somewhat hard to be cooped up with felons and cut-throats in one great house, because he had inadvertently expressed an abhorrence of crime in another.

He dispatched a messenger to Bury Street to desire the attendance of his servant, who, upon his arrival, seemed rather alarmed at the noise of iron doors heavily creaking on their hinges, and heavy bolts rattling behind him as he advanced. Finding his master at length in a tolerably comfortable room in the governor's house, he recollected himself; and having given Pen a letter that had arrived by the post after he left home, begged to know whether his master intended to remain where he was.

“I don't know—I suppose,” turning to the governor, who was in the room, “I shall not be released to-night?”

"Certainly not, young gentleman; nor for many a night, if you continue to be refractory."

"Refractory, sir! my disposition is of the most conciliatory character."

"I mean, sir," replied the keeper, "unless you ask pardon on your knees."

"Ask pardon on my knees of mortal man!"

"Of the House, sir."

"Not if the House, with the Speaker at its head, were to go down upon their own knees to court me to the degradation."

"Well, sir, that is your business, not mine; all I can say is, that the first men in the country have been"—

"Talk not to me of first men: no man is keeper of another's independence."

"I have charge of some in another department of the prison," said the keeper smiling, "who hold pretty nearly the same language."

"Who are they, sir?" demanded Pen.

"Pardon me, sir," answered the governor, retiring: "I have much upon my hands. I trust you will find things as comfortable as circumstances will admit. I fear we are not likely soon to part." So saying, he left Pen with his servant, upon whom, however, he turned the key.

CHAPTER XXI.

I HAVE, with much labour, industry, and research, endeavoured to find out something of that entertaining cast for the amusement of my readers, which several of my great predecessors in this line of history have afforded, respecting the administration of justice in its subaltern and minor departments. But I am compelled to admit, that although I have referred to the printed speeches of certain great and eminent investigators into the abuses and corruptions of government in our times, I have not discovered a single fact that would raise a laugh against that original butt of satire—a justice of the peace, or excite our indignation against the peculating frauds and venal oppression of keepers, jailers, and prison-discipline.

Now, this is somewhat singular; for the accounts to which I allude are given as matters of history by my predecessors in the good old times, which no contemporary critic ever attempted to

invalidate by counter-testimony. Such scenes of infamy, petty tyranny, corruption, and oppression, are therein developed, that even the wit which exposes them to our derision is not sufficient to awaken a smile, except it be in bitterness and sorrow that such things *could be* in a free state, and concurrent with the public career of high and exalted characters, with whose names we are in the habit of associating all that is great, elevated, and constitutional.

Was it that the leaven of corruption had so pervaded the whole mass, that patriots were fully employed in counteracting the profligacy of ministers, and thus exclusively occupied in purifying the source, presumed that the stream would run more purely in its course downwards; or was it that, caring little for the interests of petty sufferers, they devoted their zeal and their efforts to obtain power, in order to apply it with effect? This I profess not to be politician enough to decide; but thus far is clear, that the noble spirit of patriotism in our times is not only alive but rampant; not only active to pursue, but ingenious to generate grievances; and it must be confessed, that the principles of government which have influenced the policy, and been applied in particular to the administration of justice, have most unduly deprived the fair dealers in patriotism of a large stock in trade, and robbed us poor authors of most delicious picking among the offals of trading justice and the humours of the prison-house.

But, leaving both patriots and authors to consider the best means (and they each of them direct, in some shape or other, that great catapulta, the press) of reproducing, for their mutual satisfaction, the luxuriant pruriency of the "good old times," we must be satisfied, for the present, to remain shut up with our hero in "*durance vile*," in all the sad reality of woe.

Pen, probably reasoning from books, (his principal stock in trade,) had been led into the same train of reflection; for at the end of three days he acknowledged to his servant that his confinement was rather dull, and that his keeper was too civil and attentive to admit of his having any actual complaint against him.

This, however, *was* at the *end of three days*. The fever of his mind supported him during the first hours of his confinement; and the letter produced by his servant, although consisting of not one single word, contained that which was not less seasonable than surprising to poor Pen. It was, reader, neither more nor less than—a Bank of England note for £100!

He looked at the address, but the hand was unknown to him. He sent for the governor, and showing him the note, asked if this had been sent to him as a support in prison. The gentle-

man stared at the question, and had very little doubt that his prisoner had suffered in his intellect, which he considered either as the cause or the consequence of his late conduct. He smiled, however, but answered decidedly in the negative.

Pen questioned his servant, who could tell him no more than that he was as ignorant of the quarter from which it came as he was of the contents; which assertion there could be no reason to question, from the very great surprise he evinced on finding he had been for some hours sole banker to so considerable an amount.

Our hero, however, very soon came to a conclusion, which was by no means an unnatural one; and this was, that the unreasonable anger, as he felt it to be, of his good uncle Caleb had given way, and that he had thus secretly, as he supposed, supplied his wants.

He immediately (for Pen never suffered his conclusions to hang suspended, or his resolutions to cool,) sat down to write a letter to that good old man; in which he assured him that he deeply felt his returning kindness; admitted the seasonableness of the supply, and the forlorn state in which it found him, which, however, he did not pause to explain. He assured his uncle that he accepted the remittance; but could not think of applying it to his own use, until he was assured of his perfect forgiveness, which he doubted not to receive by return of post: he should then be proud to become again a pensioner upon the best and the kindest friend Heaven had bestowed upon him.

Having dispatched his letter, and being left alone, his thoughts took a new direction; and Ellice Craig seemed doubly lost to him, now that he himself was immured in a prison, and no longer at liberty to run half over the town one day in order to retrace his steps the next. This produced a new accession of fever; and having requested the governor's company, he consulted him as to the best means of getting out of jeopardy, or, in other words, of procuring his release.

He was informed that the only regular mode was to address himself respectfully to the Speaker, and Pen immediately sat himself down to make out, as he supposed, his own release. The letter, however, although written with the nicest care, and worded in his choicest style was a mere repetition of his offence; for although nothing could be more conciliatory than the tone, in stating his case, or more respectful, personally, to the high personage whom he was addressing, the sum total of the letter was a vindication of his right, in all places, and at all times, to assert the cause of truth.

He considered the governor of the prison an excellent man in his way, and capable of giving any formal advice of which he

stood in need ; but he had not the most remote notion of consulting him as a critic. He had advised the letter to the Speaker, and Pen had written it ; and, without further ceremony, despatched it by his servant the very moment he returned from performing his other commissions.

He heard no more of it ; and not being very deeply skilled in the forms of official etiquette, he conceived, that in addressing himself to any commoner, although the first in the country, he was entitled to a regular answer. Upon this point, however, he was not long suffered to remain in doubt. The governor, on the third day from the transmission of his letter, laid the newspaper on Pen's table.

He was not much in the habit of reading the journals : having, however, no books at hand, and having exhausted reflection, he took up the paper, as a resource against *ennui*, when, becoming interested in the parliamentary report, he read on, with a stronger portion of interest than such subjects generally excited in him ; for it was, in fact, an adjourned debate upon the very subject in which he had so imprudently taken a part.

Suddenly, however, he started upon seeing, in large characters, " Mr Pendarves Owen ; " which headed the following paragraph :—" The Speaker informed the House, that he had received a letter from Mr Owen, now a prisoner in Newgate under his warrant, in which, he regretted to say, the offence for which he stood committed was not only repeated, but supported by arguments which he considered highly derogatory from the dignity of that House. Here the letter was read, amidst a confused cry of ' Order, chair, chair ! ' and a motion made and carried, expressive of the high sense of indignation entertained by the house, at Mr Owen's persevering, contumacious, and disorderly conduct," &c. &c.

Pen threw himself back in his chair, felt most grievously affronted, and not knowing well how to avenge himself, demanded the immediate attendance of the only man in power upon whom he could vent his first indignation. The governor no sooner appeared, that he attacked him most furiously for the advice he had given him. " Did you not tell me, sir, that my only hope of release from this shameful imprisonment was to write to the Speaker ? "

" Truly did I, sir ; but not such a letter as I conclude from the papers you thought proper to write."

" Such a letter ! I defy any man to write a better letter, sir : it might have been printed."

" It will be, sir, depend upon it.—I gave you the best advice in my power, added the keeper ; and had you consulted me about the letter"—

“Consulted *you*, about my style, sir!”

“Nay, sir, you must judge for yourself, and I have no wish”——

“Wish! yes, you have, sir; you wish to keep me here till doomsday:—I know you.”

“Sir,” replied the governor, with firmness, “I am master here; and when you are disposed to conduct yourself with sobriety, I shall be happy to avail myself of my power to render your situation comfortable.” So saying he departed, firmly securing the door on the outside, in the full conviction that he should soon have to surrender his prisoner into the hands of another sort of keeper, if he did not show symptoms of amendment.

Pen was in despair!

Many heroes upon whom I have stumbled in this line of history would have sent out to purchase a pint-bottle of laudanum, or a brace of pistols, to put a period to an existence which had become almost a burden to him. But *our* hero, I can venture to affirm, without looking into his heart, never for a moment entertained such a thought; for in that heart had early been deposited certain seeds, which all the effervescence of youthful folly or intemperance had never been able to destroy, however they might occasionally be found to overlay them.

It must be confessed, however, that his situation was neither very enviable nor very consolatory: a young man in the full vigour of health, and with every capacity for the enjoyment of life, baffled in the dearest object of his pursuit, deprived of his liberty, abandoned by his friends, disgusted with all he had seen of the world; impatient under constraint, and yet not knowing where to turn for consolation, even if at liberty. He sat alternately the picture of pining melancholy, and the victim of impotent rage.

In this situation he was found by his servant, who delivered to him a letter, directed to “Mr Pendarves Owen, NEWGATE.”

It is strange how a word can conjure up associations which fail to present themselves to the mind in a regular progressive series of events. This address, which directly coupled his own honoured family name with a place of infamy, first betrayed to him something like a feeling of remorse at the intemperate conduct, to which his previous agitations and self-supporting consciousness of independence had hitherto blinded him. The impression was not the less forcible from the hand-writing which conveyed it; being evidently that of his old friend Mapletoft, which the post-mark of Bristol confirmed.

He dismissed his servant, and promised himself some consolation from the sympathy which his situation, together with his

letter to uncle Caleb, he doubted not, had awakened. He paused, however, as he still meditated on the wounding super-scription; and wondered why his uncle had not himself answered his letter.

In a moment he was upon his legs in a new fever of agony, under the impression that his rashness and misfortunes had overwhelmed that good man; and that he might be dying, or even dead. Ever in extremes, our poor hero threw the letter from him, and preferred, during this ebullition of feeling, to be perfectly assured from conjecture, that his worst suspicions were well founded, rather than to trust the alternative which *might* present itself upon opening the billet. So inconsistent and capricious is the human mind; ay, and many minds that have the credit of infinitely more rationality than poor Pen Owen.

At length, however, the fatal seal was broken; which, for the first time, he observed was not black, and a half gleam of hope had penetrated his mind; whence, however, it was quickly expelled, not by a confirmation of his actual apprehensions, but by the infliction of an evil for which he, of all men living, was the least prepared: of this the reader may himself judge.

“SIR,

“Your good uncle is too much irritated and afflicted to return an answer to your extraordinary letter; and allow me to say, young man, he was the last object upon whom you should have fixed to display your ingenuity. Like other weak and vain-glorious persons, you have mistaken simplicity of heart for defect of intellect. You could never else have ventured to practise an artifice so shallow, as to prove you still a novice in the art in which you have been thus zealous to initiate yourself. Did you imagine he was to be duped into a belief, after what hath passed, that your fixed resolution of receiving no further aid from his bounty would have been abandoned, just at the very moment when your wants were so abundantly supplied from another quarter? Be assured, sir, however secluded from the ways of the world, we know enough to satisfy us, that anonymous bounty, to such an amount, and so well timed, is, *at least*, a circumstance of rare occurrence. Of your readiness to become again a dependant upon Mr Caleb Owen for the more ample prosecution of your unprincipled schemes, we are none of us disposed to doubt; but this solitary instance of candour loses its only merit in the unexampled indelicacy and duplicity with which it is coupled. Good Heaven! do I live to address the child of my early affection, in the very heart and haunts of vice, infamy, and depravity; who announces himself the associate of felons and the outcasts of society, without an expression of

contrition, or any apparent sense of his own degradation. Oh, Ellice Craig!—my child, my child! to what a fate hast thou linked thyself, by this base and fatal attachment! May God forgive you! Nay, I do not say you are past forgiveness, misguided youth! He to whom we must all look for mercy, not judgment, excludes none but the hardened and impenitent; but remember, the fatted calf is not prepared for the prodigal, until he hath humbled himself, and hath acknowledged and repented his sins before God and man.

“RICHARD MAPLETOFT.”

It would be difficult to describe the situation of Pen Owen, after perusing the whole of this letter which he had indignantly thrown from him several times, before he came to the end of it. Rage kindled in his soul—his eyes glared upon vacancy—he tore his hair, and ended by throwing himself at full length upon the floor.

In this situation he was found by the keeper, who immediately rang for assistance. He was lifted insensible, on the sofa, and medical aid called in. The blood ran profusely from his nose; but upon the arrival of a neighbouring surgeon, who bled him in the arm, it was found that no actual injury had been sustained. He was put to bed, and some soothing medicines were prescribed, which soon threw him into a profound slumber.

He awoke some hours afterwards to a full sense of the misery of his situation; and not being able to endure his bed, he rose, and re-entered his sitting room, where, to his surprise, he found a nurse seated, and asleep by his fire. He was soothed by this evident attention on the part of a stranger, and the keeper of a prison, to his sufferings; and a few tears seemed to relieve his overcharged bosom, more than either sleep or regimen. He would rather, indeed, that the kindness of his host had been shown in any other manner, however gratifying to his feelings; for he could ill brook a companion in his present state of mind, still less one who could evidently have no interest or sentiment in common with him. He was, therefore, cautious not to wake her; and, gently crossing the room towards a table, on which were his writing materials, he threw himself back in his chair, and surrendered himself up wholly to his reflections. His watch lay on the table, and he saw it was past one o'clock; so that several hours must elapse before he could possibly hope to be released from his companion.

How strangely are we compounded!—We have all read of a poor wretch who, in the midst of his agony on the wheel, would have brushed a fly from his forehead; and Pen, in the midst of a train of thought which appeared too mighty to admit

of an intruding whisper from without, fidgetted, and fretted, and would have given half he was worth in the world to have conveyed the good woman, who sat sleeping before him, to the outside of the door. This he knew to be impossible, as all egress was denied after a certain hour, and this conviction probably increased his anxiety to get rid of an evil which he knew was *not* to be got rid of.

He might be indebted for much of this turn of character to his worthy father, who, we may recollect, was for ever travelling out of the high road, if the least object presented itself on either side of it, to divert his attention. It was, however, only a slight taint in poor Pen, and showed itself under a different and less inveterate aspect; but the restraint which he imposed upon himself, in the present instance, enabled him to reflect more calmly upon all that had occurred. He was much relieved by the consideration, that the cruel letter he had received had come from another hand than that of his revered uncle; and he felt more at liberty to resent the injurious aspersions cast upon his character by Mr Mapletoft. By this outrage that gentleman appeared to have cancelled all sense of former obligation.

Pen was able, therefore, to sit down and to write, which he did, the coolest and most collected letter that had ever escaped from his pen. It was not, however, the less severe; for he fully made up for angry invective and reproach, by the sober and chastised asperity of his style. He repelled the charge of duplicity and artifice, by attributing it to a wilful determination on the part of the writer to calumniate and undermine him in his uncle's estimation. He admitted he had many errors and frailties to be forgiven; but that pardon for these was to be looked for any where, rather than among those who were themselves slaves to prejudice. He deliberately pledged himself never to receive the most trifling aid from any of those who had thus unwarrantably shaken him off; and gloried in that which his old tutor had imputed as the proof of his flagitious conduct—namely, his imprisonment in Newgate.

But even when our hero was most cool, his antipathy to detail was conspicuous; being, as he conceived, a feather taken from the wing of aspiring genius, which, by a few masterly touches, infuses its own ready perceptions into a reader, or an auditor, without the tedious process of dwelling upon matters of mere fact.

Pen, therefore, concluding the notice in the public journals, which had so appalled him, must have been seen also by the confederates at Oldysleigh, never touched upon the particulars; which, if he had condescended to do, might perhaps have convinced Mr Mapletoft that he had indeed been somewhat too

harsh and hasty in his animadversions upon that head. Our hero, however, was hurried on by more attractive metal; and the reflections thrown out against poor Ellice Craig, for her attachment to him, overcame the temporary restraint imposed upon his feelings, and, having worked himself up into a new frenzy, which he transferred to his paper, without check or correction, he added full conviction—if his correspondent could yet have doubted it—that Ellice Craig, as she was the avowed inmate of his heart, was also the inmate of his cell in Newgate.

He threw down the pen when he had dashed off the sentence, struck the table with his clenched fist, and grinned horribly.

The nurse started on her legs. He heeded her not. She screamed out for mercy—fell on her knees, and prayed he would be calm; for she, too, recollected that they were locked up together for the night; and doubted not that her end was approaching, in some horrible shape, under the hands of a maniac. Pen started in his turn at her energetic appeal. He saw a female form, with her head bent upon her bosom, and the face concealed: he thought of Ellice: he heard a female voice supplicating; and, bending over the form with tenderness, burst into tears, as he raised her from the ground.

"Thank God!—you are calm, sir," faltered the poor woman; "ay, ay, those tears are a blessing; indeed, indeed, sir, they are."

Pen had retreated at the sound of her voice, and thrown himself into his chair; where he sat, again absorbed in his reflections. The woman pursued her entreaties, that he would not check himself, but cry on.

"Do, do, for the love of Heaven," she whispered soothingly; "it's your last hope."

"Kind soul!" ejaculated Pen, "it is my last hope indeed!"

"Nay, nay, sir, look to better times; many's the worthy man who has suffered for his soul's good."

"That was well said, my kind friend," sighed Pen, looking kindly towards her; "I will hope upon that ground."

"Ay, sir, your honour doesn't know half the misery that's in the world; how should such a great gentleman as you appear to be?"

"I a great gentleman!—no, my kind friend, I am an outcast—a criminal."

"A what!—why, lack-a-day, you're not on *that* side!"

"On every side!" exclaimed our hero, not understanding her allusion, and striking his forehead with his hand; upon which the good woman's fears and apprehensions returning, she, with uplifted hands, exhorted him again to "*cry a bit*,"—"just a little *bit*, for the love of Heaven." He could not cry upon compulsion

—but, as if from the true spirit of contradiction, burst into an excessive fit of laughter !

The truly curious position of the parties—the earnestness of entreaty exhibited in the countenance of the nurse—the strange association of ideas in his mind, with something, perhaps, of the *imperial notion* of the near neighbourhood of the sublime and the ridiculous, he appeared to his companion under the paroxysm of violent hysterics. She flew into the adjoining chamber for a pitcher of water, which, with many half-suppressed exclamations of horror, she attempted to discharge full in the face of our laughing and crying philosopher. He very dexterously jumped, however, upon the sofa, and received only a portion of the contents, intended for the part supposed to be most affected, upon his innocent and unoffending legs, whilst the remainder served to deluge the sofa itself.

On perceiving that she was returning for a fresh supply, he darted down from his elevation, and seizing the poor woman by the wrists, began to reason with her about her alarm, when she screamed aloud, as if her apprehensions were about to be realized.

At this moment, the lieutenant-governor, or second in command, who, in such a garrison, is expected always to be upon the alert, having been awakened by the previous event of the deluge, rushed into the apartment, followed by two or three other men, with little clothing to cover them except their shirts. The posture in which the parties were discovered was differently construed by the several intruders ; but the lieutenant, who felt that the lady was not so stricken in years but that himself might have been smitten with her charms, immediately set Pen down as a delinquent on the score of gallantry. He therefore dismissed his followers, and our hero and his companion being placed at a due distance from each other, began a lecture on morals in his own way, which seemed calculated rather to recommend the expediency of caution than the exercise of any extraordinary virtue ; and concluded with the necessity of preserving order and decency under the respectable roof which covered them.

Pen could hardly suppress another fit of laughter, which the error, and consequences of it, had produced ; but seeing that it actually gave pain to the poor woman, he could not bear to insult her by any appearance of levity. He knew how to venerate and respect the feelings of delicacy, however humbly clothed.

He explained to the keeper, as far as he was able, the cause of the misunderstanding, and requested that he would liberate the nurse, for whom he had no further occasion. The keeper was satisfied, as far as the explanation went ; but as to letting out the nurse, she might indeed, he said, accompany him to his

own room ; but that the outer doors were never opened till daylight, and that the governor always held the keys in his own custody.

The anxiety of the woman to avoid being locked up during the remainder of the night, or rather morning, with a man whom she still believed not to be quite in his right senses, and even the strong desire entertained by Pen to be left to his own solitary reflections, gave way to higher considerations, and the good woman preferred the hazard of being again alarmed by her patient, to being left under the guardianship of even a man in office, whose notions respecting the fair sex appeared to be more politic than respectful.

Matters were, therefore, restored to their pristine order, and the key again turned upon Pen and his fair companion, whom our hero now eyed with more curiosity than he had hitherto done, in order to discover on what ground the keeper could possibly have founded a suspicion of his gallantry. The investigation produced upon Pen's mind something like an impression that the man had not betrayed so depraved a taste as he had at first suspected ; for, although there was no beauty to charm, no form to fascinate, and no attractions to seduce, he beheld a woman of about forty-five, with a very interesting countenance, to which grief seemed to have been no stranger, and in whose eyes appeared to be a sensibility unusual upon faces of the more ordinary class of people.

He began to place the concern she had shown for him in a far different light from the mere common attention of a hireling ; and, strange as it may appear to those whose feelings have been properly polished by a more continued intercourse with the world, he began to be flattered and gratified by the sympathy she had expressed towards him. It must, however, be recollected in his defence, that poor Pen, Heaven knows ! had not many to sympathize with him, and this may account, to the more sentimental and refined reader, for his condescension in entertaining a feeling somewhat akin to gratitude, towards a woman—poor indeed, and forty-five years of age—but still a woman, and apparently a benevolent one.

Pen had made up his mind to the subject. He was resolved to be kind and considerate to the poor woman during the remainder of their forced companionship. Pondering upon what he should say, in order to show this disposition, he ransacked his mind in vain for some subject that might interest and amuse her. This occasioned a long silence on his part, and his nurse concluded that a moody fit had succeeded to his ravings, and that her best policy was to avoid any thing which might have a tendency to disturb him. She accordingly stepped with a light

step across the apartment, and seated herself in the arm-chair, by the fire-side, where Pen had originally discovered her. Here she sat for some time, as resolutely determined to remain silent as Pen was to say something; but both appeared to act in sympathy, and to be devoutly sworn upon the class-book of Pythagoras.

At length, the poor woman, who, though resolved not to talk, could not, I suppose, avoid thinking, heaved a most deep and profound sigh, which echoed through the silent apartment like the reverberation of an Æolian harp. Pen started, and she looked fearfully round upon him. There was, however, nothing alarming in his appearance now; for with a truly benevolent smile, he asked her what occasioned her to sigh so deeply? "I fear," added he, "I have disturbed your rest;" and, inspired by a sudden thought, which all his meditations had not suggested, he proposed that, as he did not intend to go to bed again, she should take possession of the adjoining chamber, and repose herself on the one he had deserted.

"I thank you kindly," answered she; "but believe me, sir, I did not sigh from weariness."

"What then, my kind friend?" asked Pen.

"From a grief, sir, that you can never know."

"But one which, perhaps, I may be able to alleviate."

"Never, never, sir!" exclaimed the poor woman in a tone of hopeless suffering.

"How! Are there any sufferings in your situation of life which may not be softened at least by those who are more affluent?" This was said without the smallest recollection of any change in his own circumstances.

"The riches of the Indies, sir, could not wash away my sorrows."

"You raise my curiosity, good mother. Surely, surely there are no human afflictions which charity or religion may not subdue."

"You, sir, probably have both—I think you have, or countenances are deceitful—and yet"—

"You think I do not bear my misfortunes with all the fortitude they should inspire."

"I wasn't bold enough to mean that, sir; but it is easier to preach than to practise when the blow falls."

"True, indeed; but then my misfortunes are of another nature."

"I would not pry into them, sir; I doubt not they are great, and yet more bearable than mine. You have no child, sir—the treasure of your soul; the ewe-lamb of the widow—her all—her existence."

Here the poor woman burst into a passion of tears, which Pen did not dare to interrupt or appear to notice. She looked upon him, and her favourite remedy seemed more ready at her summons than when directly recommended to her patient. Still Pen said not a word; but when she added, "Think, sir, of a mother's sorrows, when her sole hope and pride in life was torn from her—seduced—abandoned by a villain!"

"Perdition on him!" exclaimed Pen.

"Nay, I cursed him not, even in the bitterness of my sorrows," sobbed she; "I wept—I prayed for him, that his soul might be converted. Oh, sir, had you known him, you would have loved him, for he appeared all goodness till"—

"Till his goodness had answered his purpose!" cried Pen passionately. "The world is made up of baseness, I believe, madam: I have seen but little of it, but that little is vile, hypocritical, hollow, corrupt, and, probably, a sample of the whole."

"Indeed, sir, he was virtuous, I believe, till that fatal day. I had been taught to love and venerate his name long before I beheld him."

"Who—who is this scoundrel, madam? and who—pardon me—who are you?"

"My story is a simple one, sir, and not worthy your attention."

"Simple or not—I would ask—I should be delighted to hear it."

"You may be easily satisfied, sir. My father, who was a respectable yeoman in the west of England, brought up a large family of us with credit, and died, leaving to each a few hundred pounds to begin the world with. It was my fate to attract the attention of the curate who officiated in the parish, and within a few months after my poor father's death he married me. No human being could be more blessed for several years than I was in the society of the best and tenderest of husbands; but as it is necessary," said the poor woman, smiling through her tears, "that something should be found to qualify the most perfect happiness that can be looked for in our present state, we contrived to feel a disappointment in the want of children during the first three years of our marriage; and, as if to prove the folly of all human wishes, I was soon afterwards delivered of a girl. Oh, sir! the loveliest babe a fond mother's eyes ever rested upon."

"Her presence seemed to give a new zest to our existence, and we considered the gift as bestowed by Heaven upon our prayers; and so, sir, perhaps it was, in order to show how little we know what is best for us. My child was scarcely three years old when my poor husband was seized with a fever, caught

from the sick bed of a parishioner, which, in less than ten days, brought him to the grave."

Here the poor widow paused—she was overpowered by her recollections. After an interval of a few minutes, however, she resumed her humble narrative.

"Pardon me, sir; I did not think I should feel so much in this long-past misfortune; but—no matter—my situation was desolate, and had it not been for the consolation of my friends, and the recollection of my poor Rose, (for so her fond father named her,) I must have sunk under my sorrows. Oh, sir! think what it is to lose that yokefellow who has supported you in every trial, has wept when you wept, smiled with you, and shared every feeling of the soul!"—

"Good God, madam!" exclaimed Pen, whose imagination was like a train of wildfire, "what has reduced you to the state in which I find you, in such a vile place as this?"

"Alas! sir, misfortune, they say, brings us acquainted with strange bed-fellows."

So volatile and strange a being was Pen, that another association had nearly brought a smile to bear upon a very inappropriate occasion.

"But," she added "I fear I am tedious."

"So far from that," answered Pen, "that I would rather sit here and listen to you, than"—

"Nay, sir," interrupted the widow, who availed herself of the pause, which I conclude was occasioned by Pen's poverty of imagination in finding a suitable alternative, "Nay, sir; you are entitled to command me, after your condescension to my sufferings. As soon as the first effects of my grief had passed away, I was settled in a small cottage, not far from my former residence; where, upon a small annuity, purchased with my father's legacy, and the little Mr Weston had left,"—

"Your name is Weston, then," said Pen.

"It is, sir. Upon this small annuity, purchased for the life of myself and my beloved Rose, we lived together in peace and good fellowship with our neighbours; she, blooming as her name, and I gradually recovering from the loss I had sustained, by reflecting upon the treasure I possessed. My education had been good; and although my father had not indulged me in any of the vanities which were displayed by the daughters of others in his station of life, he had me carefully instructed in the duties of religion, and in such useful branches of knowledge as might stand me in need, in after life."

"I perceive it, madam," said Pen.

"Mr Weston, in his leisure hours, which were always passed in my society, endeavoured to give more cultivation to my mind;

so that I was able to afford my child many advantages denied to persons in my humble station of life. I doubt—yes, sir—I doubt whether I was not to blame. Heaven pardon my presumption, if, following the dictates of a too fond partiality, I weakened the effect of principle, by inculcating with it, a romantic sentiment more likely to undermine than strengthen it; and yet my motives were pure.”

“And correct, too, be assured,” added Pen.

“Alas! I fear not, sir, considering her humble walk in life; but it is in vain to look back—years passed on in the progress of her education. She was the delight of all who knew her, every cottage, every house in the neighbourhood, was open to her, as if each contained a parent; and nothing of rustic sport or gaiety was thought of, till Rose Weston was consulted. At seventeen, she was all that a doating mother could hope or wish for; one pang only occasionally checked the strong feeling of my perfect contentment, and that was, that her poor father could not contemplate his beautiful child. I thought he might be permitted to look down upon her, and I was consoled”——

Here she stopped, as if irresolute how to proceed. At length she cried, clasping her hands, “I feel myself incapable of proceeding in anything like a connected narrative. One fatal afternoon, when surrounded by her rustic companions, a gentleman appeared suddenly before them, in his return from a shooting party. He asked ‘if any one among them was charitable enough to bestow a draught of cold water, or the richer boon of a glass of milk, upon a thirsty sportsman.’ These were his very words. My poor Rose, always the leader and prime agent of the party, flew to our cottage, and, inviting the stranger in, gave him what he had desired. He sat down: he entered into conversation with me; and you will not be surprised that I was gratified by the attention of a young gentleman, whom, when he declared his name, I found to be one universally known in the neighbourhood as the kindest, the best, the most generous of human beings.”

“What was it, madam?”

“There alone, sir, I must claim your indulgence. It is on his high character that I still depend: there is not an oath which he has not solemnly sworn, still to heal the wound he has inflicted; for, I trust, I have done my dear child justice enough to convince you, she never would have fallen, but as his betrothed wife.”

“Villain!” again exclaimed Pen.

“Nay, nay, pray Heaven! he may yet prove otherwise.”

“But where the devil is he, madam?” cried Pen, rising up, as if he meant to hunt him down.

“His conduct is, indeed, mysterious; and his incapacity to assist us, for a time, has reduced us to”——

"How! what brought you from the country?"

"He promised that he would meet us in town."

"Has he broken his engagement here too?"

"He may be unfortunate, like yourself, sir; he may be"——

"Locked up in Newgate?"

"Or in some other place of restraint."

"What! a man of honour, of candour, of generosity, that betrays innocent maidens!"

"Are you not an instance, sir?"

"*I* betray innocent maidens!"

"I mean it would not be in your power, under your present circumstances, to"——

"To find her I love. No, no: truly, too truly—you are right! And yet, my good madam, can this man guess at your distresses?"

"Not their extent, perhaps."

"I'll hunt him down for you, or die in the attempt: give me his name—his address."

"Good lack, sir! how are you to get out? and what could you do, supposing you were at liberty?"

"True, again—I had forgotten!" sighed Pen.

"Besides, sir, it could answer no good purpose: he has reasons for keeping the affair secret from his friends."

"No honest man is mysterious," cried Pen.

"Don't say so, sir, for the love of Heaven; there are reasons, indeed there are."

"So be it; but I can frame none for a man breaking his word. You have not, however, yet told me what has brought you to this—this"——

"I was directed, sir, to take lodgings in an obscure court, near Smithfield, where we have now been three weeks. My whole stock of money being exhausted, by the journey and medical advice to my poor child, for she has been very, very ill, and my next quarter not being payable for six weeks, we were reduced to great straits, when the surgeon who belongs to St Bartholomew's hospital, observing how well I had nursed my poor Rose, promised to recommend me to any respectable families in the neighbourhood, as occasion might offer, if I were not too proud to undertake the office. Alas! not I—I have been sufficiently humbled! He was called in to you sir, last night, and thinking it improper you should be left alone, requested me to assume, for the first time, the office of nurse; in which, I fear, I have acquitted myself but poorly."

"A king could not have been better nursed, madam," cried Pen.

Here the keeper opened the door of the apartment, for it was

by this time broad daylight, and admitted Pen's servant. Mrs Weston rose to withdraw ; but Pen, detaining her for a moment, insisted upon having her address ; and slipped his purse into her hand, which contained the last guinea he could call his own in the world ; for he had not yet decided upon the appropriation of the bill he had received anonymously. The widow would have resisted his bounty, but Pen was always peremptory, and insisted upon her retaining it, at least until they should meet again.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE nurse having retired, Pen was quickly involved in the chaos of ideas and speculations upon what was to be done with respect to himself ; but, having cast his eyes upon the table, he perceived his letter to Mr Mapletoft, and a storm of passion was again raised, and could hardly be said to have subsided, even after he had made up his mind, sealed and directed the packet, and put it into his servant's hand, to convey it to the post.

He was now able, however, to turn his thoughts into other directions, and had nearly fretted and fumed himself into a fresh fever about Ellice Craig, when, observing from his windows a crowd collected round two carmen, who were stripped, and fairly set to, in a pugilistic combat, he ran to the door, in order to join the party, and see fair play : for, among his various accomplishments, the art of self-defence, according to the modern system, had not been neglected. Finding his egress barred, his indignation at being deprived of his liberty again suggested an enquiry whether he was imprisoned for life, and, if not, what was the probable period of his confinement. He rang his bell, and ordered the governor, as if he himself had held the post, into his presence. When that gentleman appeared : " Pray, sir," demanded our hero, " how long do you propose keeping me thus under lock and key ? "

" It is impossible for me to answer that question," answered his host.

" Who is to answer it, then ? " cried Pen.

" Yourself, sir ; or those who sent you here."

" Myself ! do you imagine, if it rested with me, I would remain barricadoed in this manner ? " pointing to his grated windows.

"Unless you submit yourself to the mercy of the House, you cannot expect your release till"—

"Till when?—for submit I never will to have my independence questioned."

"Till the prorogation of parliament."

"And when may that be?" enquired Pen.

"It is not known yet, sir," answered the keeper.

Pen reflected a little upon this answer: but having no argument or remedy at hand, he very candidly admitted that his keeper was not to blame, and would have dismissed him: when the latter turning round, as he was closing the door, asked our hero if he had any objection to receive a visit from a gentleman who lodged in the adjoining apartment, and who had asked several questions concerning him.

"Who is he?" asked Pen.

"It is Mr Buckthorn, sir," said the keeper.

"What is he?"

"He is pretty generally known, sir," said the keeper: he is a news-writer—an editor."

"What is he confined for?"

"A libel on government."

"On the House of Commons?"

"Why, I believe," answered the man smiling, "he has not been sparing of them either."

"Show him in: say I shall be happy to see him," cried our hero: he's the very man to 'suit the present temper of my soul!'"

In a few minutes Mr Buckthorn rolled into the room, and, in a very blunt manner, seized Pen's hand, and told him he was heartily glad to see him in that place.

"Sir," replied Pen, "I am very much obliged to you; but I think (looking round him) there is not much room for congratulation in point of locality."

"Any man may be proud of it," cried Buckthorn: "it's an honour to be persecuted by a set of vile, corrupt, and purchased slaves."

"With all due deference," observed Pen, "I see no honour in it. It would be more to the purpose, and suit me much better, if we could change places with these vile, corrupt, and purchased slaves, as you call them!"

"Spoken like a man," cried Buckthorn, "without mincing the matter, like your mealy-mouthed rascals, who condemn the honourable gentlemen opposite in neat set-phrases, to show they may be purchased too: no, sir, you are a man, I see, after my own heart. You feel the thing as you ought to do: you feel it like myself."

"Indeed, sir," said Pen, "I hardly know what I feel; except that I am heartily tired of my confinement."

"How long have you been here, young gentleman?" asked his companion.

"Nearly a week."

"A week! d—n it; I've been here upwards of eleven months, and have some weeks to run still."

"Then, I presume, you are more tired of it than myself."

"Not a bit of it: I would not truckle to the gang to save a day of it; that is"—catching the eye of the keeper, who had not yet left the room, "I'll be d—d if I would, in spite of your sneer, Mr Jailer."

"Not *now*, I suppose, Mr Buckthorn," replied the governor, coolly, as he took his departure.

"A hireling, sir," continued Buckthorn; "a base Jack in office, like his employers."

Pen requested to know what had rendered so long an imprisonment a matter of pleasure to him; and how he had passed his time?

"It's a link in the chain for their own turn. The day of reckoning's at hand, sir: there's a crick in their necks already."

"Whose necks?" asked our hero.

"The vermin; the reptiles; the jobbers; the traffickers in men's blood."

"The scoundrels," exclaimed Pen, "where are their haunts? what and who are they?"

"What! Who! You in their clutches, and pretend not to know them! Why, a'n't you laid by the heels by these very fellows?"

"Why sure you are not speaking of"—

"You know well enough who I'm speaking of. Come, young gentleman, you need not be shy with me: I can put you in a way of righting yourself, and blowing them up. I'm for plain truth in plain language."

"I'll make no concessions," cried Pen.

"That's the very thing—that's the tone—Hang them! Concessions! To whom? To your own servants, or rather the vile slaves who have usurped the places of your servants, your dependants?"

"I cannot believe," said Pen, "that all are like that vile fellow, Motley."

"Motley! Ay, there now, he's a specimen, a sample of the gang. The fellow had once something in him, but he chose to stop short: a paltry, sneaking renegado. Why, sir, he turned moderate, and cut *the* connexion: I'd have made something of him"——

"Then he has turned again," cried Pen, "for he is the most violent, outrageous"——

"Turncoat, sir; turncoat: I could never bear a fellow that turns his coat. Why, I tell you, the sneaking, snivelling scoundrel turned his back upon me. Yes, sir!—me, myself!—he wanted to curry favour with ministers, or mayhap to join the gang."

"Nay," replied Pen, "there you're wrong, sir; depend upon it."

"I depend upon being wrong!—You don't know who I am, sir!"

"I declare, sir," continued Pen, "there is not an epithet of foul-mouthed detraction, abuse, and scurrility in the vulgar tongue, which he did not apply to them."

"He be d—d!" exclaimed the patriot. "It's all palaver; stage-trick. Why, he's probably paid for it."

"In truth," cried Pen, "I can believe any thing of him.—So you really do not consider him even an honest Whig?"

"An honest Whig! Good! Why, who the devil ever heard of an honest Whig?"

"I didn't suspect you of being a Tory, sir?"

"A Tory! Another of your nicknames to gull the people! Do you mean to insult me, young fellow? I a Tory? I a Whig? A plague on both their wrangling factions! There isn't a pin to choose betwixt them—they're all of the same gang, the same herd, only marked in their coats, like sheep, to show what master they belong to."

"This is new to me, sir; I am a raw politician."

"So I perceive, young man, and so much the better. The less you know the better. You hav'n't sold or swapped your principles?"

"Swapped or sold my principles! Do you take me for a scoundrel, Mr Buckthorn, that would, under any circumstances, barter my conscience?"

"Fudge! Don't dance the high ropes, young gentleman; you don't know yourself yet. Give me leave to tell you, no man knows how to resist till he has been tried."

"Then I presume, sir," said Pen with somewhat less complacency, "*you* have been tried?"

"That have I. I might have had a *carte blanche*, young gentleman; I might have made my terms; I might have had ministers, and their creatures, and their tools, and their sweepers, their offscourings, and hirelings, all at my beck and call, sir—under my thumb, sir—under my thumb."

"If *you* would have been a hireling too?"

"Yes, sir, if I would."

"And were you?" asked Pen, as if a sudden thought had crossed his mind.

"I! I support the vermin for hire?"

"Gratuitously then?" continued Pen. "Either you have a namesake, or, if I am not mistaken"——

"Confoundedly mistaken, young man."

"Not in my recollection of the fact. There was a public writer on that side of the question whose works I have read as matter of history—a coarse but nervous original"——

"No doubt, no doubt. Show me a style among your creeping, crawling things of authors now-a-days. Swift had some talent, but he was tame, tame, sir; he was, besides, a Tory."

"I see we mean the same. It was this Buckthorn that confirmed me in principles, as far as I had then turned my mind to politics, which remained unshaken till"——

"Till you conversed with me."

"Nay, sir," said Pen, "your inferences are rapid. Till I thought myself an oppressed man, and this, I suppose, will go far to make a patriot," continued Pen laughing. "But this eloquent champion"——

"Who should it be but myself? D'ye think there are two Newtons, two Buckthorns?"

"Upon my soul, sir, I think there are of the latter, if you speak as you think *now*, and wrote as you felt *then*."

"Pshaw! Nonsense! I was bamboozled, humbugged, muzzled."

"Nay, sir, how can that be? the man I mean boasted his independence; and, I will confess, it was upon his facts, rather than his arguments, that I established my creed."

"Sir," answered Buckthorn, who, strange to say, seemed to shrink from the observations of an inexperienced stripling, "I was young; I was led away by my feelings—my diffidence."

"Humph!"

"You may sneer, sir; but, I repeat, I was unused to the ways of the world."

"Yet your asserted claim to public confidence," observed Pen, "I recollect well—now the circumstance has recalled it to my memory—was founded on your boasted knowledge of the world. You bore personal testimony to the consequences of principles which you denounced, and gave chapter and verse for"——

"The more fool I, the more fool I, I say. How was I rewarded for it? what did I get? what did the sons of corruption give me for my pains?"

"How! reward! You claimed only the reward of good men; the approbation of your country. You could not expect reward from those whom you lashed."

"Who were they, pray?"

"The sons of corruption; the Jacobins of France and the democrats of America."

"*They* sons of corruption! You mistake the whole case. I speak of those whom I was idiot, dolt enough, to support—to uphold—to save from perdition, by my pen."

"Why, surely you did not carry your principles to market—you were not base enough to barter your conscience?"

"Conscience! what would you have me to do with it? starve—rot—die on a dunghill!"

"By Heavens would I!" cried Pen in a fit of moral enthusiasm; "I would rather chop this hand from my body than suffer it to work for the filthy wages of prostitution."

"You would think twice, young fellow," cried Buckthorn, "before you did that, I can tell you. But you are raw; you even don't know the terms you employ. I saw corruption paramount, and I resolved to expose it. I was consistent, whilst others were apostates."

"What!—*all*?"

"All who deserted the cause."

"What cause?"

"The cause of the people, anti-corruption, young gentleman; the cause of an oppressed—bankrupt—ruined—enslaved population."

"Yet, surely, you held them up to the eyes of Europe and America as the happiest, the richest, the most prosperous and free people under the sun."

"The times are altered. Zounds, sir! you don't perceive the change."

"In your principles, at least, it is evident."

"That's the cry of the vile hireling press; but I despise—detest—abhor—execrate—and will exterminate them ——. I have shown, I have disproved their lies."

"What! Have you proved that black is white?" demanded Pen.

"That what *they* took for white is black," retorted Buckthorn.

"What *you* took for white."

"I never made a mistake in my life. I knew my men always."

"And yet you supported them."

"D—e, young man! if I don't believe you're a government spy."

"A government what, scoundrel!" cried Pen, starting up and seizing the patriot by the collar.

"Hands off!" roared the patriot: "I'm not to be bullied."

"Bullied, sir! by all that's sacred, unless you swallow your words, you shall swallow something still harder of digestion!"

A violent struggle ensued, in which, however, the vigour of

the young man prevailed; and Buckthorn, gradually receding, demanded what had offended his fiery antagonist.

"Offended! Why, thou apostate!"——

"There—take down his words!" cried the patriot.

"Didst thou not call me a spy?"

"And have not you called me apostate? that's quits. Look ye, young gentleman, I'm afraid of no man; it's *my* character."

"Which of them, sir?" cried Pen, foaming with wrath. "Do you dare repeat your suspicion?"

"Suspicion! I have none—none whatever."

"Of what?"

"No man shall compel me to say what."

"Do you charge me with being a spy?"

"A spy! Not I—never dreamt of such a thing."

"Did you not call me so?"

"I might; but 'twas merely a phrase, a simple phrase. My language is nervous—strong—energetic. Show me the man who knows the use of it like me. I only meant that you cross-examined me as *if* you were hired. We are used to this style; it tells; it is every thing. It comes home to the people, sir."

"But do you suppose any gentleman will put up with it?"

"I have nothing to do with gentlemen: I talk of men. I abominate the odious distinction of gentlemen. By the observations you threw out at first, I thought you of the right sort, and only expressed my disappointment energetically."

By degrees Pen became pacified; and the prudent patriot thought it wise to sound a retreat.

The fact is, Buckthorn had received an account of Pen Owen after his committal, which rendered him an object of some interest with the faction to which he belonged. A young man, of good birth and fortune, as report had given him out to be, who had expressed, in unambiguous terms, his love of independence, and his indignation against the proceedings of Parliament, in his own case at least—impetuous, volatile, and obstinate, as it appeared, in the course of the transaction in which he had been engaged, and in his address to the Speaker, was not to be slighted—a happier subject, indeed, could not apparently be found to work upon. He might be rendered a useful ally to those guardians of public liberty who tyrannise and persecute on paper, in the true spirit of political toleration, all who oppose them, and whom, if they should ever have the power, they are not likely to spare in their notions of distributive justice. The natural vulgarity and grossness of Buckthorn, to which all around him were in the habit of submitting, had led him into a scrape, from which it required all his address to extricate himself. Despairing, however, of making any thing of a spirited young man,

who was likely to think and reason for himself, he took his leave, little satisfied with his success in this attempt at individual reform.

Pen was more ruffled than he appeared to be before his visitor; for he had, in fact, experienced a qualm of conscience at having entertained, for some days, too strong a feeling of irritation against the laws of his country, because he thought himself aggrieved by a partial application of them. The works of Buckthorn, which had, some years back, very much attracted his attention, in discussing the causes and events of the French Revolution, were forcibly retraced and canvassed in his vivid imagination, by the strange coincidence of being thus suddenly brought into contact with the impugner of his own doctrines; and, with all his faults and imperfections, our hero had an innate detestation of every thing that was selfish, mercenary, or time-serving.

The interview operated upon him, as it will generally operate upon candid minds, like the exposure of the drunken Helots before the Spartan youth; and, however he might feel as a patriot and a lover of freedom, he quickly perceived that he had no sentiment in common with adventurers, swindlers, and hireling journalists, who dogmatically arrogate to themselves titles belonging exclusively to men of high, unimpeached, and honourable principles.

He felt the error of his conduct, and even ruminated next morning upon the propriety of a public recantation and appeal to the high authority, he now acknowledged to himself, he had outraged, when the governor, entering, informed him, that the Parliament being unexpectedly prorogued, he was no longer a prisoner.

A man may sit very peaceably and contentedly by his own fireside for a month, and hug himself with the comfortable assurance that there is no business to call him out during a hard frost, or a succession of stormy weather; but the same man shut up, "upon compulsion," will no sooner feel himself at liberty, than, if it were to rain cats and dogs, (to adopt the energetic language of Buckthorn) he would issue forth, without hat or greatcoat, simply because he had a right to do so.

Pen was in this very predicament; for, having now resolved to apply his hundred pounds, as a loan at least, to his present necessities, he hardly allowed the governor time to pay himself, (which subtraction, by-the-by, made a considerable *hiatus* in his note) before he was in the street, striding along, through filth and mud, amid "the pitiless pelting" of a storm, proudly rejecting the solicitations and hailings of expectant hackney coachmen,

and buffeting his way, on his own independent legs, to his lodgings in Bury Street.

Having dispatched his servant for his baggage to Newgate, and dressed himself, he again issued forth to enjoy his liberty. He felt assured that there would be no further difficulty in discovering the retreat of Ellice Craig, the greater impediments being apparently removed by his liberation from confinement. This, however, was the reflection only of an hour; for, when he began to consider the little success which had hitherto attended his researches, he felt his hopes damped, and his spirits proportionably depressed. His sensations were also considerably sobered, when he reflected further, that he had not now a friend in the world to whom he could embosom a thought, or apply for aid or counsel.

He regretted that he had broken off his connexion with Major Irwin, the only being, since he had been thrown upon the world, who appeared to understand his character or feelings. He would have disdained to be influenced by anonymous calumny, and, as I have before said, would immediately have shown the warning note to the major, had he not, by so singular a coincidence of events, been made to witness a scene, which, in many points, seemed to confirm the information he had received. He had, previously to his unfortunate imprisonment, kept his eye constantly about him in walking the streets, to observe if any one appeared to follow his steps or to watch his motions, being determined to take all possible measures to discover the object the major had in tracing his movements.

Still ruminating upon this subject, he had wandered into Kensington Gardens; and, strolling through one of the most retired of the walks, perceived a man, enveloped in a large military cloak, looking at him with an appearance of considerable attention. He turned, and the person took an opposite direction. They again met; and, after having a second time crossed each other, Pen observed that, at a certain distance, this intruder had remained stationary, with his eyes still fixed upon him. His resolution was immediately taken; for he had no doubt of his man. Advancing, therefore, towards him, he told him that he "perfectly knew who he was, and what was his business there."

"Then, sir," replied the other, "it would well become you to retire."

"Retire! Do you imagine, sir," exclaimed Pen, "that I will suffer any man to dictate to me where I am to go, or what I am to do?"

"I do not pretend to dictate, sir," answered the stranger; "but if you really do know the cause of my being here, which is inexplicable to me"—

"Yes, yes, inexplicable enough; but my information is pretty accurate."

"Then, sir," replied the stranger, in a higher tone than he had before assumed, "I need hardly repeat to you that you ought to know how to act."

"You are not the person," retorted Pen, "likely to influence me in that respect. In short, sir, I know you: I know your whole scheme."

"Then, sir, I must tell you that you are a most impertinent intruder; and that I insist upon your quitting this spot without a moment's delay."

"If I stir a step, sir," cried Pen furiously, "may I"—

"Then, sir, you shall find I am not unprepared for your insolence," returned the stranger, presenting a pistol to prevent the advance of Pen.

"What! is it my life you aim at, villain?" cried Pen.

"Certainly, if you advance a single step," replied the stranger; "but I only insist upon your immediate retreat, without further explanation. At any other time, I shall be ready to afford you the satisfaction you may require."

"Satisfaction!" almost roared Pen; "do you imagine I will ever condescend to meet a fellow of your condition?"

"Such language, sir," replied the other, with the utmost *sang froid*, "I hardly expected from a man of your appearance. I can only repeat that you must leave this spot at present."

"Must!"

"Yes, sir," cocking and presenting his pistol; "must. You know where to find me, of course."

"Yes, yes!—I know where to find you, and how to treat a ruffian!" exclaimed Pen, who, indignantly turning on his heel, snapt his fingers at his opponent, and marched off, fully determined to call Major Irwin to account for the gross insult he had thus sustained in the person of his agent. A doubt of this being that gentleman's valet never glanced across his mind: the voice, he felt assured, he could have sworn to in a crowd; and he had seen enough of the world to be prepared for a valet being, at least, as respectable in his appearance and demeanour, as many whom he is appointed to serve.

Never had Pen suffered such an indignity—never had his notions of independence been so rudely assailed—nothing but the conviction that the real affront was offered by his employer, and not by his tool, had prevented him from taking the bull by the horns, and rushing upon the stranger at the risk of being shot.

A man of violent passions or irritable feelings, may suffer more by the rubs, and crosses, and vexations of life, than one of

a more placid and equable turn of mind ; but he has the advantage of being excited, rather than depressed, by unpleasant occasions ; and I am not quite clear whether the sensations under his present provocation were not of a pleasurable nature, since he had now, he thought, detected Major Irwin in the prosecution of his designs upon him, and felt he had it in his power to take full vengeance upon him for them.

He returned, therefore, with all expedition to his lodgings ; and having, in his first wrath, struck off a note to the major, he rang for his man, and ordered him to deliver it immediately. The servant asked for the address, which occasioned the first pause in the full flow of Pen's feelings, who, like a true hero, had determined not to dine till he had wiped off the foul stain upon his honour.

In vain did he send to several of the club-houses and coffee-houses, not forgetting the one at which they had formerly dined. Major Irwin was very generally known ; but it was not believed that he had any fixed residence in town. The hotel, however, which he frequented, in his visits to London, was pointed out, and the important billet dispatched to Nero's, in Clifford Street.

During the absence of his servant, Pen had opened his pistol-case, examined the hair-triggers, and pointed them at the wall, at the window, and at a map of the world which ornamented a pannel in his apartment, still pacing and fuming up and down, as if he feared a single particle of his anger should escape by any distraction of his mind to other subjects.

The servant at length returned : he snatched the note he held in his hand, and tearing it open, without listening to the man, found, to his utter horror, that it was his own. He seized the unfortunate messenger by the throat, and demanded what he meant by trifling with him, and had nearly throttled him, before he could collect that the major had left the hotel some time before, and was supposed to be out of London.

Driven almost to madness, he threw himself into a chair, not knowing how to give vent to the torture he endured. At length, after nearly an hour's paroxysm, he felt assured that the major was at Oldysleigh, and there was some relief in the very act of dispatching his challenge. Folding up the note in a blank sheet, he directed it to Oldysleigh, and was just in time to catch the bellman at the corner of the street ; (not choosing to trust his servant, because he was disgusted with his want of success) and, thrusting a couple of guineas into the man's hand, instead of the usual fee, attended not to the surprise marked on the fellow's countenance, but watched only his other hand as it dropped the letter securely into the crevice of his bag.

This matter being adjusted, and having assured himself that

his remedy, although postponed, was now in progress, he proceeded to a neighbouring coffee-house to take his dinner, and to allay the thirst his fatigue and agitation had occasioned.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OUR hero had not long been seated, with a bottle of hock before him, several large glasses of which he had swallowed in soda-water, whilst his dinner was preparing, when a middle-aged gentleman walked up to the fire-place, and desired one of the waiters to bring him the bill of fare. The man was entering into some explanation, when, turning towards Pen, he requested to know if he had any objection to that gentleman (pointing out the new comer) taking a part of his table, as the coffee-room was full. Pen looked at the stranger, and not considering it a mere act of courtesy, but as the preliminary to an acquaintance, seeing nothing to excite antipathy, very good-humouredly answered, that so far from it, he should be happy in the gentleman's company.

This being duly acknowledged by the other high contracting party, they sat down together; and, as they manage these matters better in public than in private establishments, the tedious half-hour before dinner was considerably abridged; and before the first ceremonies were adjusted, and the state of the weather freely discussed and ascertained, a smoking tureen of soup was placed between the two new acquaintances, who sat *vis à vis* to each other.

For some time very little conversation took place, it being carried, *nem. con.*, that the soup was excellent; nor, indeed, was there any debateable matter afforded during the remainder of the repast. Independently of a few passing words of approval, the two gentlemen, who appeared to be equally capable of appreciating the merits of the artist, were so fully employed in practically discussing them, that every word uttered seemed to be considered as an encroachment upon that distinguishing organ of our species, which, at particular hours of the day, concedes the necessity of receiving more than it gives, even among those most disposed to be profuse in their exercise of it.

Our forefathers very wisely established the custom, which might otherwise savour of a barbaric race, of applying vinous potations, to oil the hinges, as it were, of the faculty which has

thus been kept in a state of temporary disuse, and to set it going in a redoubled ratio. This is so gratefully acknowledged by a very large proportion of society, that the moment this application is made to the sensorium they become most eloquent, and by combining, comparing, and analysing the various discoveries and improvements, elevate the *art gastronomique* to that philosophic altitude so anxiously claimed for it by the profound Archimagiri—Ude and De Beauvilliers.

Our two gentlemen, however, having bestowed sufficient eulogium upon the viands produced in succession, or perhaps not being sufficiently qualified, by the study of the *Almanac Gourmand*, to hazard any abstract opinions upon the subject, suffered their dinner to digest itself in the ordinary way; and, after two or three bumpers of claret, looked about for some other topic of conversation.

On these occasions, where two persons are thrown together, without any previous knowledge of each other, their topics are necessarily confined to the news of the town, or the politics of the day. Indeed, the limitation may be said to extend no further than the former; for, as political opinions are sometimes sufficient to separate the interests of the best friends, they may make a still greater confusion, if suffered to interfere with a connexion so recently formed. In order, therefore, to avoid any thing which could possibly interrupt the perfect harmony subsisting between the parties in question, the stranger, who appeared to be the best bred man in the world, carelessly took up the *Courier*, which had just been placed upon the table by the waiter, and, as a matter the most uninteresting, observed, "that strange, mad fellow, Owen, I see, is liberated from Newgate!"

"Ye—ye—yes," drawled out Pen, colouring up to the eyes; not from any sensation of shame; but at the compound epithet which his companion had coupled with his name. Luckily the stranger, who still continued to read the paper, did not observe his confusion; I say, luckily, because nothing is so awkward both to plaintiff and defendant, in a cause of this nature, as a blundering and floundering attempt to get out of a scrape which all the explanation in the world cannot mend.

Pen therefore had time to recollect himself before his companion proceeded in his animadversions.

"I understand he is a gentleman; and a man of education—a little flighty I suppose."

"I think he is," returned Pen, in an under tone.

"I find he is a friend of Buckthorn's," continued the proser.

"Not he, on my soul!" cried Pen, eager to repel the imputation.

"The paper says they were much together during his confinement."

"By Heaven, sir, I never saw him but once," exclaimed Pen, "and then was nearly provoked to kick him out of the room."

"Who?" demanded the stranger, looking full at Pen.

"That fellow Buckthorn"——

"Ho, ho! my good sir," said the stranger, laying down the paper, "you know Buckthorn, then. Well, there is much to be said on both sides. He is a strong writer; and we should make allowance for"——

"I repeat to you, sir," cried Pen, "I do not know him; I never saw him but once; it is altogether a confounded falsehood, inserted probably by the fellow himself."

"I beg your pardon," said the stranger; "probably you are acquainted, then, with this Mr Owen."

"To be sure I am," cried Pen with precipitation; but, checking himself, added with a smile, "perhaps I ought to acknowledge that I do not know him so well as I ought to do."

"How is this, sir?" demanded the stranger.

"That Mr Owen has the honour, sir, of addressing you at this moment."

"Bless my soul! I request you to believe that I was not aware"——

"My good sir," answered Pen, "you have said nothing that can give me a moment's uneasiness. If you had known me better, probably you might have expressed yourself more strongly against my folly and intemperance."

"Not I, in truth, Mr Owen. I am certain that if you will allow me to profit by this accidental meeting, I shall have reason to congratulate myself upon having formed a most agreeable acquaintance."

He then proceeded to defend the conduct of Pen Owen, upon the broad principle of right to express freely those opinions which a man conscientiously entertains; and Pen, whose heart was always open to kindness and attention, warmed by certain copious libations to the social deity, professed the most profound gratitude to his companion for the sympathy he had expressed; and concluded, as was habitual with him, to unbosom himself to his new friend, and to admit him into every secret feeling of his soul, as well as every transaction of his life.

It is true, the latter portion was scanty, having not much to relate; so that his auditor, if he did not happen to be the best listener in the world, (by-the-by, a most popular and acceptable character in most societies,) was not compelled to resort to those manifold expedients which suggest themselves to the unhappy victim of a tedious or a thrice-told tale.

The fact is, Sir Bland Blinkingsoph (for such was the stranger's name) had taken a fancy to Pen, was pleased with what he had perceived of his conversation, and evinced so much sincerity when he again requested permission to cultivate his friendship, that Pen did not hesitate to express the happiness he felt in meeting his advances.

Just at this moment a gentleman, who had dined in another part of the coffee-room, left his company; and, approaching Sir Bland, after the first salutations, informed him that his acquaintance Lord Dash, had eloped with the beautiful Mrs Fourstars; and lamented the infatuation which had led to this event, so fatal to the prospects and character of both.

"It is a pity indeed," cried Sir Bland; "they are both excellent creatures; and there are many allowances to be made for their indiscretion."

"My dear Sir Bland," replied the other; "you are aware that the husband was the benefactor of this boy—the friend of his youth."

"Oh! truly it is a most pitiable event, it must be confessed: still young men will be young men: we cannot place a grey head upon green shoulders. Hey, my good friend?"

"But such a breach of friendship—of every tie of"—

"Be assured he did not view it in this heinous light. Want of reflection is the defect of youth. Though I do not defend the step—Heaven forbid *I* should!"

"That I'm sure you do not," said the other; "but you are proverbially indulgent, Sir Bland: you feel more than you express."

"Indeed, you do me injustice, if you think I am not shocked. I consider moral rectitude as the keystone of society: I condemn the treason as much as you can do, Colonel Sibthorp; but I cannot help sympathising with the little traitors."

"Good God, Sir Bland!" exclaimed the colonel; "do you pity this false woman? Rich, young, beautiful, wedded to the man of her choice—a man whose virtues are only surpassed by the suavity of his manners and the delicacy of his taste."

"Very true, very true," answered the baronet; "there's not a word to be said on that score; but then the head of so young a thing is easily turned by flattery; and her education must be taken into consideration."

"By Heavens!" exclaimed Pen, with an emphatic rap on the table, "she must have been educated by the devil's dam, if, young as this gentleman describes her to be, she can be so depraved."

"Hush, my good sir! I admire your zeal; but zeal is still a distemper of the mind," added he smiling: "it distorts objects, and blinds us to all but one side of a question."

"Can there be two sides to such a question?" cried Pen.

"There it is," calmly observed Sir Bland: "would you, unless influenced by this temporary enthusiasm, deny what every soph in the schools is capable of proving? but pardon me, my good sir, I make every allowance for your feelings—I judge of no man; however, I perceive I shall not make converts of my friend Colonel Sibthorp or yourself, and therefore wish you good evening, for I have an engagement which presses. We shall meet again, and soon, I trust," said he to Pen, with whom he exchanged cards and retired.

The Colonel, who remained standing near the table from which Pen had also risen, observed to the latter that there was not so liberal-hearted a being in the world as their friend Sir Bland Blinkingsoph; to which Pen silently assented; adding, however, that he had had as yet but little opportunity of becoming acquainted with his character, and then stated the circumstances of their accidental meeting. The colonel observed, that he had made a very valuable acquisition in the acquaintance of such a man; and concluded his remark by saying, that if he had any fault, it was that of being *too good*.

"It is an uncommon one at least," observed Pen, with a smile.

"I mean," answered the colonel, "that he is rather too indiscriminating in his charity."

"It is impossible," exclaimed Pen, "to be too liberal!"

"You thought otherwise just now," observed the colonel, smiling.

"I can scarcely think he was in earnest, or perhaps he was blinded by his attachment to the parties."

"He is but slightly acquainted with either."

"Then I confess his leniency was unpardonable."

"That is, he is *too good*—you have just hit my meaning. The fact is, sir, Sir Bland has a large fortune, keeps an open table, is in love with the world, and sees every thing *couleur de rose*. He possesses a naturally even temper, which he has fortified by philosophical studies; and, having few prejudices, he associates with men of all principles, parties, and pursuits. For instance, you will meet at his table, princes of the blood and pugilists, placemen and patriots, high church divines, Calvinistic seekers, and free-thinking philosophers; mechanics, painters, players, fiddlers, and buffoons; ladies of rank, women of character, *bas bleu* pretenders, and—demireps of neither rank nor character. He seeks the fair side of all things, and always finds something upon which to exercise his charity; so that, at the very moment he is contemplating the happy result of banishing prejudices, he is offending, in the strongest and most offensive manner, the prejudices of all around him."

"Can candour, then, be mischievous?" asked Pen, rather of himself than of his companion, who, slightly bowing, returned to his own party, and left Pen to his reflections.

In the midst of these, as he was standing with his back to one of the fire-places in the room, which was nearly opposite to the entrance, although at some considerable distance from it, he perceived the faces of two persons holding the door a-jar, with their eyes fixed intently upon him. He was at first startled; but the notice which this seemed to give to the intruders of their being observed, caused the spring-door to shut; and he thought no more about it, till, a few minutes afterwards, turning his eyes in the same direction, he again perceived the same countenances, the features of which were lost in shadow, viewing him with the utmost earnestness.

Pen darted immediately forwards, but the game was flown; and when he reached the street, he merely heard the sound of retreating steps, which, from former experience, he did not rashly pursue.

Connecting, however, this circumstance with Major Irwin's conduct, he had no doubt that these were some of his spies, set to watch his motions, and, of course, felt all his indignation revived. Resolving to seek him out, if he received no answer to his challenge the next morning, he knocked at his own door, with a violence that bespoke the strength of his resolution. The servant, however, not being so prompt, because, it is to be presumed, his spirit was not so active as his master's, did not immediately obey the summons; and Pen turning, in a fit of impatience, towards the street, perceived a man standing directly opposite to him, on the other side of the way, with his eyes fixed upon him. He did not hesitate to demand, in a loud voice, what was his business there, and even advanced some steps, which the other perceiving, turned upon his heel, and ran off as fast as his legs could carry him. By this time the door was opened, and Pen prudently entered, instead of pursuing the phantom, which, however, still more strongly confirmed him in his opinion, that the life of black Jack was a necessary expiation for his daring offence in watching and dogging him from place to place, and thus trenching upon his independence and freedom of action.

The morning on which he expected an answer from the major, he watched the arrival of the post with the utmost anxiety; but although he made his servant cross-examine the scarlet-coated Mercury, as to the contents of his bag, after he had passed the door without knocking, he was assured that there was no letter for him.

In this dilemma, he sat down to put the finishing stroke to a

little poem, which he had sketched at intervals, upon a very interesting love-tale, that had occupied the public attention for some weeks past, and upon which he hoped to raise the supplies which his present mode of life, however economical in his opinion, and the drain occasioned by his imprisonment, rendered urgently necessary. Having finished this paper, he began his toilette, preparatory to his visit to the bookseller; not to Mr Duodec, but another gentleman, whose name was distinguished among the modern patrons of poetical merit. His dressing-table fronted the window which commanded the opposite side of the street; and just as he had thoroughly enveloped his face in a strong lather, preparatory to the operation of the razor, his eye was attracted by two persons who, arm in arm, had stopped immediately in front of his window, and were looking up directly towards it. He was satisfied that one of them was the spy, by whom he had been outraged in Kensington Gardens; and, of course, Mr Morton, the major's agent.

He started from his chair, and, rushing to the window, would have thrown it up; but (as it generally happens when we are *over* eager, or in a particular hurry) the sash resisted his utmost efforts to lift it; and before he could reach the other, the objects of his indignation and curiosity had walked on.

He rang his bell furiously; but the servant preferring to kill two birds with one stone, chose to infer that his master wanted his Hessians or Wellingtons, (I have not been able to ascertain which,) and therefore stopped to give them the finishing polish before he obeyed the summons; for which specimen of false reasoning, he was kicked half down the first flight of stairs by Pen, who awaited him on the landing-place. He had no sooner regained his legs, however, than he was commanded to run after and seize two men in dark-coloured greatcoats, who had just passed on the opposite side of the street, and bring them into his presence.

The poor devil was in doubt whether he should proceed upon such a wild-goose chase, or leave his infuriated master to find some more active or enterprising messenger to execute the mission. His place, however, upon the whole was an easy one; and he ran forth, with the intention of retaining it by apparent obedience to orders, which were incomprehensible, and as he was fully aware—impracticable, whilst Pen, with a face like a snow-ball, and his person scarcely shaded by his shirt and dressing-gown, shouted to him out of the window, to the admiration of the whole neighbourhood, and pointed out the line he was to pursue.

The man took to his legs, nor stopped until he arrived in St James's Street, during high mall. Here he found so many dark-

coloured greatcoats in single, double, and triple file, lounging in all directions, that his powers of selection were baffled. He ventured to ask two or three of the most peaceable-looking of said surtouts, whether they knew his master, Mr Pen Owen : but receiving only a laugh, or a gentle oath in return for his impertinence, he gave up the cause ; and taking a quiet saunter for half an hour, to afford time for his master's impatience to cool, (according to a calculation he had formed upon actual experience,) he returned with an account of his bootless errand ; adding, however, to the plain truth, the palliating embellishment that he had seen two greatcoats, answering his master's accurate description, mounted upon two separate bits of blood, and riding off at a hard canter towards the palace. When interrogated, why he had not pursued them, the servant swore (it was but one oath more) that he had done so ; but that, perceiving him, they had mended their pace, and completely eluded his pursuit, by turning through the Stable-yard into the Park.

This gratuitous account of his adventure averted the current of Pen's indignation from the ingenious narrator, and again swelled it into a mighty tide against Major Irwin, whom he had now made up his mind to post in every coffee-room at the west end of the town.

At this moment, Sir Bland Blinkingsoph was announced, who, after the usual salutations, assured our hero that he could not refrain from taking this early opportunity of availing himself of his permission to cultivate his friendship. He added, that having a few friends to dine with him on the following day, he trusted Mr Owen would, as a proof of his reciprocating the sentiments he himself entertained, waive all ceremony, and join the party at seven o'clock.

Pen could not have evaded the invitation had he wished it ; and, as he did not wish it, the point was soon settled to the satisfaction of both parties.

Pen, as an earnest of his confidence, imparted to Sir Bland his intended visit to the bookseller, and ventured to consult him upon the object of it. The poem was produced, and Sir Bland listened with much attention and apparent satisfaction, interrupting the nervous reader with an occasional "Very well, indeed !"—"Excellent !"—"Capital !" &c. When the work was finished, our hero felt that there never had been so execrable a performance penned, and throwing it to the other side of the room, felt heartily sorry he had exposed himself so unnecessarily to his new friend. When Sir Bland, however, pointed out specific beauties, emphatically repeated some favourite lines, and spoke in a calm and sincere tone of its general merits, Pen

became re-assured, and ventured to ask his companion if he really thought it was worth publication.

"Worthy! my dear sir," answered Sir Bland: "I have no doubt, with Modely's aid, it will bring the author into very general notice. No one can deny it to be an elegant and classical production."

"Nay, Sir Bland," replied Pen, blushing, "it only professes to be a trifle."

"*Ex pede Herculem*, my good sir: a taste, a specimen, is sufficient for those who can see the hand of a master in a single stroke. I do assure you, I do not flatter, when I express my conviction that it will take with the public."

"Since," observed Pen, "I can suspect neither your judgment nor your sincerity, I shall be encouraged to make the attempt: but now, Sir Bland, tell me truly, are there no very glaring faults; nothing where your taste might suggest an alteration?"

"Indeed, I perceive none. I should perhaps—though I don't know, as public opinion runs in the present moment; perhaps if I consulted merely my own feelings, I should say—that those particular passages which ascribe motives to the crimes of your principal character, might be a little softened."

"Softened!" exclaimed Pen; "I hardly thought they were strongly enough expressed."

"That's natural in a young and ardent mind like yours; but a little knowledge of the world is necessary sometimes to put a check upon our best feelings."

"Surely, surely," cried Pen, "where we are painting the criminal excesses of a character, some motive must be assigned. The impulse must be accounted for on some other supposition than sheer, innate, natural depravity."

"Some of our divines," said Sir Bland smiling, "admit that this is sufficient."

"Heterodox teachers, Sir Bland."

"Who shall decide that they are wrong, Mr Owen?"

"Plain sense, and sound interpretation of revealed wisdom," exclaimed Pen.

"And who shall fix these? No, no, my dear sir, we must leave men to form their own judgment upon these points. Heaven forbid that I should lean towards such principles! but I am tender of the feelings of those who differ from me.—What I mean to say, with respect to this elegant *morçeau*, is—that in those occasional bursts of feeling there is a rigid—perhaps a too rigid tone of morality, for the nature of the work."

"Too rigid!—too lenient, rather, Sir Bland. I was occupied for a whole hour this morning in endeavouring to strengthen the tone of abhorrence against a wretch, who, instigated to

destroy his friend, is encouraged to the act by the sophistries of infidelity."

"And yet all infidels are not murderers, Mr Owen," said Sir Bland.

"Nor does every rogue hold a pistol to your breast," retorted Pen, "unless all other means fail to relieve his wants; still you will hardly defend the principle, or rather, want of principle, which renders the alternative a matter of indifference."

"Principles!" replied the baronet, "principles, Mr Owen, are sacred and immutable. The rule of right cannot be mistaken; but the human passions are desperate opponents; and we must admit the difficulty of combating them."

"We may admire those who succeed, but surely not justify those who"—

"Justify! my good sir! do I justify the infraction of our social duties? I only claim that allowance for the frailties of our nature, which the Christian scheme itself appears to me to allow."

"Christianity tolerate vice!"

"Nay, my friend," said Sir Bland with infinite good-humour, "you anticipate all my conclusions. I would not tolerate vice any more than yourself; but I think we should weigh the mixed motives to human action, even those of immoral action, against those propensities which nature has planted in very unequal proportions among men. We cannot judge in others what may be the strength required to resist the temptations within."

"We can calculate the means of resistance; and if we, by a misplaced indulgence, contribute to weaken those means, we assist to betray a man to his bitterest enemy."

"We do not, surely, weaken the means of defence, by showing mercy after the battle is lost, my good sir," said the baronet, with a smile of contented triumph.

"I do not exactly understand you," cried Pen, somewhat impatiently.

"I mean," answered Sir Bland, "that a victim to headstrong passions is more an object of pity and consolation, than of anger and invective."

"And are we therefore to forget our duties towards society? Is our pity for a scoundrel to obscure our notions of right and wrong, or to lessen our abhorrence of vice, because he has suffered the penalty of which he was forewarned?"

"What good will you get by railing at him?"

"Why do you hang a criminal?"

"You must put that question to others," answered Sir Bland: "I may have peculiar notions upon the subject; but I neither know why we do, nor by what right we do it."

“By what right the laws condemn a criminal! What! would you”——

“My dear friend,” interrupted Sir Bland, “I would do nothing: I have only some old-fashioned notions upon subjects of this nature, which existing prejudices would condemn; and it is natural they should. *Le bon temps viendra!* In the mean time, we wag on, and laugh at the follies of the world. This is better than the obsolete mode of shooting at them; hey, Mr Owen?”

And so saying, the worthy baronet left Pen to digest opinions, which at least possessed the advantage of novelty, and which he knew not yet whether to approve or condemn, from the obscurity of their tendency, and the ineffable good-humour with which they were propounded.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AFTER the departure of the baronet, Pen proceeded to call upon Mr Modely the bookseller, when, being ushered into a splendid drawing-room, surrounded by rosewood cabinets and inlaid cases, in which were placed, in superb bindings, all the rare works of art and genius, he almost doubted whether he had not mistaken the address, and penetrated into the library of a man of fashion.

Turning, however, towards a large study-table, on which were deposited all the journals of the day, together with all that was new in foreign and domestic literature, he became reassured; and after having waited for an audience some time, was admitted into another equally well furnished apartment, from which a noble lord was just making his exit, while expressing, in the warmest terms of regard, his obligation to Mr Modely for something which did not reach the ears of our hero.

His host, now turning towards Pen, requested him to be seated, whilst he, retiring to his desk, apologized for keeping him waiting as he docketed and arranged some MS. papers which were lying scattered before him.

Pen, upon being courteously asked to what Mr Modely owed the honour of this visit, frankly stated the object of it, and concluded by placing his poem in the hands of the bookseller. Mr Modely promised to read it, with every disposition to render justice to the author; and appointed a time for his report.

He then adverted to the politics of the day, to which Pen listened with great attention; and being informed that many of the leading characters in the political as well as literary world were accustomed to meet in the afternoon, in the adjoining room, very thankfully accepted a general invitation from the master of the house to join the party, when he felt himself disposed to do so.

Pen, whose heart, unlike the temple of Janus, was open in peace as well as war, mentioned the establishment of Duodec, and certain parts of his conduct towards him, which had so outraged his feelings. Modely informed him that he was a man of no character in the trade: that he was a mere tool of faction; and a sort of rallying point for second-rate authors, and disappointed politicians.

Pen spoke of Pepperal, the reviewer, and lamented that the noble office of a critic was in the present day degraded by the usurpation of such a despicable race of men. Modely smiled, and assured him, that he was the mere creature of a party, whose talents were well enough calculated for the meridian in which they shone; and that the work he edited was of no repute among the more discerning portion of the world.

At this moment a little man opened one of the folding doors, telling Modley that he wished to speak with him when at leisure; upon which Pen arose, and was about to take his leave, when his host informed him that this was a reviewer of a very different cast, and whispered his name. Pen started, and exclaimed, "Indeed! then he has but to lift his lash once more to disperse this new tribe of insects and creeping things, and their coryphæus, Pepperal, into the bargain."

Pen was charmed with this interview. He was pleased to find the dry monotonous technicality of trade banished from the abode of the Muses; and the refinements of liberal intercourse between men of letters and their publishers substituted for Smithfield bargains among literary higglers and chapmen.

In passing through Piccadilly on his return to his lodgings, he was surprised to find himself face to face with Frank Wettenhall; and perhaps it was fortunate for both parties that our hero happened to be in so complacent a humour as not to knock down a man for whom he entertained so inveterate a grudge, before he had allowed him to utter a word explanatory of his conduct; but that gentleman, whose manners I have before had occasion to observe, were of the most conciliatory character, managed matters so adroitly that Pen was completely disarmed before he had made up his mind to begin an attack.

That young gentleman began by apologizing for availing himself of this accidental meeting to explain to Mr Pen Owen

a circumstance which, he feared, had occasioned no very inconsiderable misunderstanding between them, and which he lamented too much, considering the relative connexion of their two families, to suffer longer to remain without explanation. He trusted to Mr Pen Owen's liberal construction of his silence respecting the challenge he had received from that gentleman ; and that he would impute it neither to a deficiency of proper spirit, nor of proper respect towards him, but that the events which had preceded, and so rapidly succeeded, the period fixed for the meeting, had afforded him an opportunity of ascertaining certain facts, which would have rendered him highly criminal had he prematurely sought to repair his injured honour.

It will not be supposed by those who are at all acquainted with the character of our hero, that he suffered young Wettenhall to proceed even thus far without many violent and intemperate interruptions ; but upon being assured that an explanation was about to be given, he grew moderate by degrees, and at length awaited, with all possible attention, what his supposed rival had to say.

Mr Wettenhall explained, that he had not been aware of our hero's attachment to Ellice Craig previous to the extraordinary scene in Barton Copse, where the ardent avowal of his affection at once surprised, and, he owned, irritated him. He allowed that he might have suspected Mr Pen Owen's affection for that charming girl, had he not been taught to believe from some observations of Mr Caleb Owen, that his nephew regarded her in the light of a sister only ; and that being thus thrown off his guard, he had inadvertently admitted into his heart a passion which he had found great difficulty in suppressing.

He assured our hero, however, that he had gained a victory over himself, and that he was actually employed in arming his reason against this fatal passion, when he encountered Pen a second time in Barton Copse ; but that the impetuosity of his rival, and his determination to call him to account, had closed his mouth against any expression of his sentiments, and, least of all, any advance towards a reconciliation. He added, that when the account of Ellice Craig's elopement reached the vicarage, where they both were, he could not help coupling a very extraordinary coincidence of circumstances which had awakened his suspicions that very afternoon, and acknowledged that he considered the whole plan to have been arranged by Pen himself.

"What, sir !" exclaimed Pen, turning round, and looking his rival in the face, "you dared to take me for a villain !"

"Pray, Mr Owen, be satisfied—be calm ; I will explain every thing. I cannot be supposed to consider that an act of villany,

which, in exchanging situations, I should have felt myself fully justified in attempting. If I have offended you by my suspicions, I request your pardon ; I really did not intend to injure you by them ; although methinks, under the circumstances, even a successful rival"——

"A rival, sir !" exclaimed Pen.

"A rival, be assured, sir, no longer ; yet you will, in your calmer moments admit—that in a state of contending and highly irritated feelings, such as mine must at the time have necessarily been, some allowance may be made for my unjust suspicions."

"I don't deny it—go on, sir."

"I went off, as you know, in pursuit of the fugitive ; and, as I understood afterwards, you took another road for the same purpose."

"Another road, sir !" cried Pen, "I took twenty."

"I did not, however, find you in London, and returned to relate my disappointment to our disconsolate friends at Oldysleigh. There I thought my suspicions corroborated, if not confirmed, by the report of a neighbour, who had seen you in a chaise and four with a lady."

"What villain dared to say so ? By Heavens !—it is too true. And was this construed into guilt !—why, sir—the old—no, no, the good, kind soul who took me in her carriage, for a single stage, was as grey as my grandmother."

"This formed no part of the evidence : it was simply stated that you were accompanied by a female : this, added to the further report of your marriage at Gretna Green"——

"Marriage at Gretna Green !"——

"There can be no doubt," interrupted Wettenhall, "that these unfortunate circumstances, so easily explained, led to a train of inferences, natural in themselves, but which a word of explanation might have done away."

"Have I, then, all along," cried Pen, in an agony, "been suspected of a vile, base, and contemptible scheme—marked and pointed out as a seducer, a betrayer of innocence, a plotter, a scoundrel, whilst my heartstrings have been bursting for the loss of the very being"——

"Be calm, be composed, my dear sir : I trust and hope that all will be settled and explained to your satisfaction. On the first doubt which suggested itself to my mind, I resolved to unravel the mystery, and to ascertain, if possible, the real situation of things. Upon enquiry last night, in the neighbourhood of your lodgings, I was fully satisfied that you had no lady under your protection ; and, considering this at once as a proof of your innocence on the main fact, I resolved to hazard every personal inconvenience, and to present myself before you, at your lodg-

ings, this afternoon. Chance, or, I may more properly say, Providence, has brought about the wished-for interview, where, from the publicity of the situation, I have been spared, perhaps, some personal indignity, which my unexplained conduct might have incurred, and which the customs of the world, no less than my own passions, thrown off their guard, might have rendered indelible, by any satisfaction short of the life of one of us."

Pen had suffered a variety of emotions during this recital; but he could no longer withhold the tribute which he felt due to the conduct of a man, whom he appeared to have injured on every point most galling to the feelings of self. He found he had been guilty of injustice towards him; and, even in the moment of this conviction, reproached himself for the lurking remains of antipathy which he could not so suddenly conquer. He, however, shook him by the hand, and asked pardon for his rash and impetuous conduct.

At this moment he lifted his eyes, upon hearing the approach of a horseman, when they rested upon Major Irwin, who, with a countenance expressive of contempt and indignation, was looking alternately at him and his companion. Pen darted forward to detain him, but received only the splash raised by the horse's hoof, as he struck into a well-filled kennel, under the sudden spur of his rider.

The groom, as in duty bound, followed his master's steps; and, whilst our hero was vehemently ejaculating the most opprobrious epithets against his persecutor, and calling upon him to stop, he received a second supply of mud and filth from the plunge of the said attendant's horse.

To those who are in the habit of walking the streets of London—even the very best-tempered and mildest of pedestrians—such a salute has a considerable tendency to put their philosophy to the test. When to this is added the already irritated state of our hero's passions, at the renewed insult on the part of a man whom he already thought worthy of being sacrificed to his vengeance, the reader may, in some measure, be prepared for certain extravagances on the part of Pen Owen.

Having rushed forward in pursuit of the enemy, he overturned so many intervening obstacles, in the shape of apple-stalls, old women, dandies, and sedan chairs, that, by the time he was at length arrested, through the efforts and entreaties of Frank Wettenhall, who had followed in his wake, he found himself surrounded by a host of plaintiffs, and their counsel, and their evidence, and their supporters, collected with so much facility and expedition in the highways of the metropolis, as very fairly to entitle the assemblage to the generic term of a mob.

Pen, finding himself thus hedged in, considered his indepen-

dence affected, and began to stir his elbows right and left, in order to support it with all his native energy. Wettenhall in vain acted the part of mediator. As fast as he conciliated, our hero provoked a new war; and, without calculating the odds against which he was contending, felt himself fully equal to disperse the whole body of his assailants.

He had already lost his hat, and, in vain efforts to recover it, his coat was nearly torn from his back.

A fellow, who probably was interested in creating a diversion, had received a blow from Pen, and returned it with such good aim, as to bring the blood not only into the face, but to give it a full current through his nostrils; upon which the cry of "Ring, ring!" was echoed and re-echoed by hundreds, who wished for no better sport than to see "a gemman's pride" brought down to a level with their peers, and by a more select party of bystanders, who looked to the chances of war for certain captions which such engagements generally presented to their hands.

In this situation, with Frank Wettenhall—scarcely less disfigured by foul contact with his neighbours—haranguing the multitude to secure allies, our hero, covered with dirt, besmeared with blood, without hat or coat, presented himself to the astonished eyes of—(whom think you, gentle readers?)—of Ellice Craig herself! who was no sooner perceived by Pen, than, forgetting insults, injuries, offended dignity, nay, the world and its sum total of inhabitants, he rushed towards the carriage, from which, with an air of terror and distraction, she looked towards him. A shout of "A white feather! a white feather! a sneaker! D——n him, down with him!" accompanied by the rush of the whole body, effectually blocked up his passage; and the instantaneous order of Ellice to the coachman, to drive on, and the descent of the blind, as rapid as lightning, rendered our hero little better than what he appeared to be—a madman.

He foamed at the mouth—he raved—he aimed his blows in every direction, calling upon the carriage to stop, and vociferating the name of Ellice. All was to no purpose. John Bull, although we are assured, from the very best authority, and by his very best friends, that he is a spiritless, enervated, gagged, and oppressed slave, continues to act as if he were the only judge in his own cause, which he takes care to decide according to his inherent notions of right and wrong; and, in the present instance, having brought in poor Pen guilty of *lèse majesté* against the sovereign people, by striking, and otherwise maiming, insulting, and plotting against them, and then turning tail upon the champion who had espoused their cause, pronounced the sentence of ducking, *nem. con.*, and forthwith began their measures to carry it into effect.

In this instance, however, contrary to the usual event on such occasions, Mr John had counted without his host; for Pen, quickly disengaging himself from the myrmidons of mob-law, flew upon his original adversary, as the cause of all his misfortunes, and in a few minutes gave him so complete a drubbing, that he became the favourite of the field; and the very party which was foremost in carrying the former sentence into effect, now rushed forward to raise him upon their shoulders, and bear him in triumph from the arena.

Whether it was for the purpose of rendering their voluntary burden as light as possible, or that they thought he had gained glory enough to recompense him for any other loss he might sustain, is uncertain; but the fact is indisputable, that when Frank Wettenhall, after much toil, labour, and popular manœuvring, had safely lodged him in a hackney-coach, his watch, and the small remaining remnant of his property, had taken their departure.

Never was hero in a more deplorable state—never had hero less reason to glory in a triumph. When he could collect words sufficiently connected to form a sentence, he asked Wettenhall whether he had not seen Ellice Craig? To which the other replied, if he could suppose Miss Craig was in town, he should certainly think it was she.

"Think!" exclaimed Pen—"think!—can any man doubt? Is there another—is there a parallel?" In short, he was violently eloquent, and eloquently violent, till the carriage drove up to his lodgings, when Frank Wettenhall, helping him to alight, led him, in this distracted state, to his apartment. Here, requesting to be left to his own thoughts, he thanked Wettenhall for his zeal and services, and requested to see him the next morning.

For several hours Pen remained alone, when his servant, gently knocking at the door, not choosing to make too sudden an irruption into the presence, was admitted; and presenting a note, which had just been delivered by a strange woman, asked if he intended to dress?

Pen looked at the poor fellow, as if he thought himself endued with the powers of Medusa's head; and, bestowing a hearty curse upon him for his want of feeling, ordered lights, and tore open the note. It was anonymous, and in a female hand.

From whom could it be but Ellice Craig? Angelic girl!—she had found him, and pitied him, and was resolved to recompense him for all his sufferings.

These convictions flashed upon him with the celerity which philosophers ascribe to a ray from the fountain of light; for they were entertained and dispatched in the interval between

breaking the seal, (which, in his state of mind, was not likely to be a tedious operation,) and the very first words that caught his eye in the paper. These were no other than “Perfidious, cruel man!”

“What!” exclaimed our hero, “is this the comfort I had anticipated?” He read on.

“Perfidious, cruel man!—for by what other title can I address the being who, having taught my love to repose upon his honour alone, now deserts and abandons me to my fate. Alas! Pen Owen, is it come to this? Hope had not utterly forsaken me, until I heard that you had been in town for some time. An accident has just betrayed to me the place of your abode, where you were traced from a scene which, had I not witnessed, no one—no, not the world—would have induced me to credit. But it is past. Oh! when we parted, Pen, little did I—how could I?—think it was thus we were to meet again, or that, to complete my degradation, I should be compelled to reproach you with neglect and desertion in my utmost need! And yet, I repeat, come to me—come and receive my too easily won forgiveness, or I am indeed your lost!”—

It would afford little satisfaction or amusement to the reader to repeat in detail upon every occasion (and they are of very frequent occurrence) the effects of irritation, anger, or grief, the disappointment of speculation or frustration of hopes produced in the soul of our hero, and issuing in such manifold and multiplied acts of violence and extravagance. I shall, therefore, only observe, that a communication which appeared at first to be the harbinger of happiness, as clearing up a mystery which had been the only bar to it, tended to involve this mystery in tenfold darkness.

It was, indeed, hard to incur reproaches for conduct where alone he thought himself invulnerable; and to be condemned to the stool of repentance where not even the shadow of guilt had been incurred. But he could have borne this, had there been any means pointed out of fulfilling the unnecessary injunction of appearing face to face before his fair accuser. Neither date, signature, nor postmark, however, afforded the slightest clue to a discovery of the residence of the writer. He examined his servant again and again respecting the messenger.

She was a decent, middle-aged woman, who had neither asked a single question nor made a single observation, having simply desired that the letter might be delivered to Mr Pen Owen immediately.

Pen, with his usual reasonableness when his passions were afloat, swore at the stupidity of his attendant for not having detained the messenger—for not having watched her steps—for

not having found out who she was, where she came from, and where she was going; in short, for not doing that which no man in his senses could have found any reasonable pretext for doing, and for not acting the part of a maniac, which Pen was actually exhibiting, as he tossed about the books, furniture, and other moveables which came within reach of his hands or feet, whilst pacing up and down his apartment. At length his old resource occurred to his mind, which, although it certainly had no one successful precedent to recommend it, he preferred to all the other suggestions which presented themselves to his mind, as a means of extrication from his present state of almost intolerable uncertainty. He snatched up his pen, and wrote the following advertisement:—

“E. C. may rest assured that P. O. can most satisfactorily explain the conduct which appears so much to have distressed the feelings of E. C., if E. C. will only condescend to point out a place where P. O. may be permitted to see E. C.—P. O. is, and will remain, in a state of distraction until this indulgence be granted.”

His servant, who could write a fair clerk-like hand, was placed at the table to assist the despatch of his eager master; and the joint secretaries made out no less than eight fair copies, for as many morning and evening journals. He scarcely allowed time for blotting and folding, but, pushing his man out of the room by the shoulders, commanded him to pay double, if necessary, for immediate insertion. The servant, however, returned in a few minutes, to the utter dismay of our hero, who could admit no plea of sufficient force to justify the delay, although the poor fellow kept repeating that he had not given him the money necessary to execute his mission.

Pen, at the moment, recollected that he had not a sixpence in the whole world; but he would have arrested the first person in the street, rather than have foregone his present purpose; he, therefore, desired him to be gone, and to pay for the advertisements himself; or call upon the landlady, in his way down stairs, to advance the necessary sum.

The poor fellow returned again with a long countenance, saying, that he had not more than fifteen shillings in his pocket, and that “Mrs Martin had declared she could not think of lending money, as there was three weeks’ rent due for lodging.”

Here was Pen mounted again upon his high horse; and, for a hero, it must be admitted he was in rather an awkward and embarrassing predicament. He seized his hat; told his servant to insert the advertisements as far as his funds would allow—ordered him to return home immediately, and descending the stairs rather by leaps than steps, burst open the parlour-door,

and ordered Mrs Martin to send up her account forthwith ; and gave her notice, in no very qualified or measured terms—that he should leave her and her lodgings when his week was up ; that was, in two days.

If the reader is puzzled to know what new sources Pen anticipated for the due performance of all the obligations included in his threat, I believe it would equally have puzzled our hero himself, if he had thought at all upon the subject at the moment, to decide the question. He had made the determination ; and, feeling a sort of confused conviction that, by giving scope to his imagination in the open air, something would suggest itself for his relief, he rushed out of the house.

It will be recollected that he had not dined, and it was now somewhere about eight o'clock ; and as heroes, as well as heroines, in spite of all we read to the contrary, must eat, and submit to all the ordinary functions of nature like other people, in order to keep body and soul together, Pen began to feel, in spite of his other natural sufferings, that his stomach had no intention to surrender its claims upon his care. In vain did he remonstrate with it, that necessity has no law ; the savoury steam from the kitchen of a coffee-house he had frequented gave fresh vigour to the argument, and it was by main force that he dragged himself and his stomach bodily, out of reach of the seducing effluvium.

He sought a more retired street for his meditations ; and, no doubt, could I with any propriety convey him to such scenes, purling streams, and tangled brakes, moonlight dells, and mossy cells, would have been more in character with his present thoughts, than teaming kennels, luckless beautraps, or glaring gas-lights.

He was, however, sufficiently abstracted in his reflections to render it of little consequence where the corporal machine wandered. It is possible that the fresh air of a more rural scene might have given a keener edge to his appetite ; whilst even the prospect of a good dinner must have been excluded from his mind's eye, which ever and anon, as I have before been compelled to hint—drew him from his present abstractions.

There is another circumstance yet behind, which never could have occurred as a matter of hope or consolation amidst the wilds of nature, and this was no other than the lamp which displayed the name of Modely in large characters upon a door, and which brought our hero home to his present actual state of being.

He felt re-assured ; here was his banker. He knocked, and was immediately admitted to Mr Modely's presence, who was sitting with his family after dinner. Our hero was not prepared for the accompaniments ; but the case was urgent, and he was

resolved to persevere. He apologized for so unseasonable an intrusion, and requested five minutes' audience of his host; who, showing him into another room, shut the door, and requested him to be seated.

Pen was now in a new situation; and, not having studied his part, was at some loss for his cue. Luckily he had to do with a man who understood the world, and who sympathized in the feelings of a gentleman, labouring evidently under difficulties, the novelty of which embarrassed him. Finding that Pen continued merely to apologize for his unseasonable visit, in a sort of broken language, which had clearly nothing to do with the motive of it, Modely very good-naturedly took the burden upon himself, and began (looking at the same time over a table on which his papers lay scattered) by observing to himself, in a sort of suppressed tone, "I wonder where I have put it—no matter," turning to Pen; "since I have the pleasure of seeing you, Mr Owen, it will answer the purpose as well. I had written a note to send in the morning, merely to say that I had read the little poem with which you favoured me, and had consulted a friend upon it."

Pen felt as much confused as if called upon to break the ice himself. Mr Modely continued—"I find it, Mr Owen, so much to my satisfaction, that I will undertake to publish it."

Pen was delighted.

"I have no doubt but it will succeed—I have been pretty fortunate in my speculations this way, and do not think I shall fail in this."

Pen bowed.

"Now as to terms, Mr Owen—these are awkward topics—but it is necessary"—

"No, no!" exclaimed Pen, "these need no discussion—you must arrange them yourself, Mr Modely—the thing is too trifling to"—

"Nay, nay, my good sir," answered Modely, "we do not judge of poetry as our custom-house connoisseurs do of pictures, where the duty is apportioned to their bulk: these are matters which are always better adjusted by being previously understood."

"Indeed, indeed!" rejoined Pen, "I can say nothing on this point."

"I have found no such difficulty, Mr Owen, with very great men, who have confided their works to me—and even peers have condescended to treat with a purveyor to the muses," added Modely smiling.

"That may be, Mr Modely; but by Heavens, I cannot"—

"Then, sir," returned the bookseller, "I must run the

hazard of being thought illiberal, by fixing my own terms, and "——

"That's what I wish," interrupted Pen: "say no more, I entreat you, Mr Modely."

"Shall I say"——

"Say nothing," cried Pen, starting on his legs: "do what you think right: I shall be satisfied, perfectly satisfied—I wish you good evening, Mr Modely," shaking that gentleman by the hand, "good evening."

"But will you allow me to"——

"Oh! by no means—on no account," cried the pride and susceptibility of Pen's mind, whilst his bowels were absolutely groaning within him.

"Well then, my dear sir," said Modely, opening the door, "we must find other means"——

"Any means you please, my dear sir—good evening;" and away darted Pen, who probably would have resented as a personal injury the offer of wages for his performance, at the very moment he felt the cravings of poverty, and had actually entered the room for the very purpose of satisfying them. Such is the whimsicality of dame nature in the manufacture of us poor frail beings; and if any of my readers should aver that this is none of her work, I tell him in his teeth that he knows little or nothing about the matter.

In his way home, Pen had necessarily to pass the very temptation he had before resisted; and whether a revolution had taken place in his mind, or to use a very homely phrase, his stomach "had come down," by which is meant, I presume, that the aforementioned organ has taken the form of a suppliant, not to be resisted—it is certain that he boldly entered the coffee-room, and ordered his dinner as usual. This he soon dispatched, and having taken a few glasses of wine, told the waiter he had no money about him, with an air of indifference he did not feel—and rose from the table. To his great relief, however, the man, to whom he was known, merely answered, "It is just the same;" and Pen left the coffee-room with his appetite and his apprehensions greatly relieved.

Upon his return to his lodgings, he found upon the table the detailed account of his lodging, and sundry charges for coals, candles, &c. in formidable array against him, with a few lines from his indignant landlady, to inform him that she had let the lodgings from the day on which his term was up. He was again in a state of irritation, and the organs of digestion being quietly employed in the home-department, there was nothing to interfere with the full enjoyment of his mental perturbation. He raved against his own refinement of feeling in not accepting

the accommodation Modely was disposed to offer him, and at length retired to bed, to dream over the incidents and misfortunes of the day.

In the morning he awoke, stiff from the blows he had received the preceding day, and unrefreshed by slumbers which had been a succession of hideous phantasmas, taking all the various forms of his heated imagination; and when the reader comes to reflect upon the mixed matter which must have been crowded together in his mind—his meeting with Wettenhall—his rencontre with Major Irwin—his engagement with wheelbarrows and apple-stalls, together with the battle royal in which he was finally involved; and adds to these the sight of his beloved Ellice—the curious and perplexing billet, *doux et aigre*—and the bankrupt-state of his finances—I think it may be allowed that he shone a greater hero and philosopher than the better portion of his fellow-men, by being able to sleep at all; and that if his dreams were a little out of the ordinary track—they were any thing but unnatural.

Notwithstanding all these impediments, he ate his breakfast, and during the meal, had ascertained that two of the daily papers contained the advertisement upon which he now rested his main hope of recovering his lost mistress. Whilst he fancied he was reading debates, scandalous anecdotes, and political squibs, which were contained in the papers, he was interrupted by a note from Mr Modely, in which was enclosed an order for thirty guineas, with many apologies for so depreciating a memorandum of his engagement with our hero.

Pen, who thought the poem might have produced, as an article of sale, a few pounds, was utterly astounded at this mark of liberality, and the manner in which it was conveyed; and, in the warmth of his feeling, acknowledged the receipt of the sum, stating it to be as much beyond his expectations, as it was above his deserts; adding, at the same time, that he should be happy to consider it in the character of an advance, very seasonable at the moment, for any future effort he might have it in his power to make in return.

This matter being dispatched, and something like a ray of sunshine let in upon his mind, he gave Frank Wettenhall, who was soon after announced, a very warm and gracious reception. He renewed the conversation of the preceding day; and, having taxed his stars with the evil consequences they had produced, he gave him the note he had received; and, when Wettenhall had twice perused it, he observed that the hand was surely not that of Miss Craig.

"No," answered Pen, "that's quite evident."

"Then," continued his companion, "how do you know it comes from her?"

"Why, who the deuce else can it come from?"

"It must be a mistake—probably wrongly directed."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Pen: "does she not name me twice in the note?"

"True!" cried Wettenhall: "I did not advert to that, it is unaccountable indeed—how she should know your address!"

"She tells me, does she not, that I was traced home."

"True again," said Wettenhall, after a pause; "and yet"——

"Yet what?" cried the impatient lover.

"She speaks as if you knew where to find her."

"It is an oversight."

"Not so: she complains of wilful abandonment."

"There's some egregious error on her part, which an interview will clear up at once."

"And how will you procure it?" asked Wettenhall.

"I've arranged all that," said Pen.

"Arranged it, how?" exclaimed his companion.

"By an advertisement."

"An advertisement! would you betray the name?"

"Betray—psha, read," putting the paper in his hand.—"What! you don't seem to approve the plan," cried Pen, observing something to warrant the suspicion in his friend's countenance.

"Nay," answered he, "you are the best judge; and, indeed, it is useless to talk the matter over—since the step is taken."

"And it should be taken, were it in my choice still. What! am I to sit tamely down, with my hands before me, when Ellice Craig is perhaps within a few streets—a few yards of me! What do you take me for, Mr Wettenhall? I tell you what, sir, if I do not receive an immediate answer, I'll have her cried through the town."

"Surely, surely," cried Wettenhall, "that would be very rash."

"Rash or not, by Heavens I will find her, although I perish in the attempt!"

Wettenhall found it vain to stem the torrent of passion, which evidently overwhelmed the reasoning powers of his companion, and very wisely turned the conversation to other matters. Pen had on the previous day expressed his determination to return immediately to the country, in consequence of Wettenhall's information that his friends, through him, were now assured of his innocence respecting the flight of Ellice Craig; but the young gentleman had very strongly advised him to wait until some other particulars of his conduct had been cleared up to the

satisfaction of the Oldysleigh party. He intimated the displeasure they still entertained against him, on account of the disgrace of his confinement in Newgate, and some other excesses which had been reported with exaggerations, at headquarters; but which, he trusted, through his mediation and representation, might effectually be done away.

When the conversation was renewed this morning, he intimated that Mr Caleb Owen had once thought of coming up to town himself, in order to ascertain certain points.

"And who prevented him?" asked Pen.

"We thought it would be advisable"——

"Advisable! What, to keep my indulgent uncle from his poor calumniated nephew? This, I suppose, is some of Mr Mapletoft's refined policy: it is of the same texture with his letter. Who shall dare to interfere with my uncle's inclinations?"

"Nay," observed Wettenhall, "your uncle was most indignant."

"Indignant! at what! because I committed a few blunders, and lost my temper?"

Mr Wettenhall did not prolong a discussion, which, in the present tone of his companion's mind, was more likely to confirm than remove his prejudices; and, as it would now have been as difficult to get him out of town, as a few hours back, it appeared to keep him in it, he troubled himself no more with the question. He soon after took his departure, when Pen, ordering his landlady to appear before him, gave her the draft for £30, desiring her to have it changed, and to deduct what was due to herself; informing her, at the same time, that he should leave her house early the next day.

It was fortunate for our hero, that he recollected his engagement to dine with Sir Bland Blinkingsoph, for he had no hopes of receiving any answer to his advertisement before the following day; and the torture of suspense would have been intolerable, had he been compelled to rely wholly upon his own resources. He accordingly dressed himself, and ordered his servant to secure a room for him at an hotel in Bond Street, for the next day, not having either time or inclination to seek for other lodgings.

CHAPTER XXV.

UPON his arrival at the baronet's, he found several guests, male and female, already in the drawing room; and began, accordingly,

to apologize for his late appearance, when the arrival of more company interrupted him, and convinced him he was in very fair—fashionable time. He was introduced to several of the party by name; but either the wanderings of his own imagination, or the want of any peculiar recommendation in the physiognomy of the several individuals, prevented his catching, or bestowing any particular attention upon them.

The dinner passed, as most large dinners do; that is, little was heard during the first course beyond the ring and clatter incident upon the rapid change of plates and dishes, and the jingle of glasses. Common observations, and trite remarks upon passing occurrences, were added to this running accompaniment during the second; and by the time the dessert was fairly on the table, and the servants withdrawn, the large party seemed broken into separate *tête-à-têtes*, in each of which the conversation was carried on with as perfect indifference to the collective body, as if a barrier, or party-wall, had substantially intervened between them.

Pen, unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately for him, was not coupled—being placed between a coquette and a *bas bleu*, who having, the one, a member of the French Institute, and the other a beau guardsman, to the right and left, our hero was suffered to pick up, in silence, whatever rose above a whisper, from the several coteries around him.

One lady, and a very pretty one too, who sat nearly opposite to him, engaged his attention occasionally, from a sort of correspondence or sympathy in their situation—for she, having a fortune-hunter on one hand, who was availing himself of the absence of a watchful aunt in making his way to the heart, through the ear, of an heiress; and, on the other, an author, who was paying court to an Edinburgh reviewer—was scarcely more attended to than Pen himself.

A few observations were attempted across the table by these insulated powers; but the unceasing hum which so many tongues, in motion at the same time, occasioned, together with the exertion of making themselves heard, soon threw them back upon their own resources, and occasioned a motion, on the part of his female ally, at an earlier hour than usual to leave the gentlemen to their bottle.

The scene was immediately changed, as if Monsieur Arlequin had waved his wooden talisman over it. Every man, who felt he had been condescending to lower himself to the level of female gossip, now seemed armed to enter the lists of war, politics, or the graver topics of philosophy and science, with any who should first give the word to fall to.

I have often been induced to speculate, under such circum-

stances, what turn a conversation would probably take, before any signal were thrown out, and have been surprised at the mighty matter elicited from a spark, which, at the first glimpse, has appeared as unlikely to reach any such matter, as to kindle it, if it did so.

After a pause, during which the bottle had been duly set in motion by mine host, the young guardsman exclaimed, as if speaking only to himself—"How execrably out of tune Catalani sang last night!"

"She had been dining at Lord Crotchet's," observed a gentleman.

"It would be as well," cried a third, "if his lordship attended more to his official duties."

"I never heard that the one was sacrificed to the other," said a fourth.

"How did the late negotiation break off?" asked a fifth sneeringly.

"Through the insincerity of the enemy," fiercely retorted a sixth.

"Nay," observed Sir Bland Blinkinsoph, "no man could believe that any thing serious would result from it. Time was necessary for both parties, and that was the point to be gained."

"I must beg your pardon, Sir Bland," replied General Offset. "If the measure proposed could have been effected—and it ought to have been effected—the balance of Europe might have been restored."

"As how, may I ask?" coolly demanded a secretary in one of the public offices.

"As how, sir!" replied the general: "why, sir, the balance of Europe is—is—every thing. Yes, sir—yes, sir—it embraces the whole question."

"The *whole* question, my dear general!" cried Tom Sparkle, a professed wit.

"Yes, sir, the whole question."

"Then it accounts for Catalani's singing so execrably out of tune, as my friend Gorget says, last night."

Now, Tom Sparkle was wont to "set the table in a roar;" and even if the general, who had been laid upon the shelf for notorious incapacity, and, since he had become a patriot, had rendered himself the butt even of his own party, had not deserved the lash, the droll association of cause and effect, in a jumble of the origin and progress of a critique upon the *prima donna* of the Haymarket, to a question on the balance of Europe, was irresistible, and left the gallant general the alternative of joining in the laugh against himself, or putting it to the issue of life and death. As the harmony of the party was not disturbed by any

symptom indicative of the latter, we are at liberty to presume he adopted the former, although, it must be confessed, the muscular contortions of his visage partook more of the sardonic, than of the fresh-faced, shining divinity, whom the Thessalians hailed as the patron of good fellowship and fun. This might, however, have proceeded, in some degree, from the indiscretion of Pen Owen, who I need not, in this stage of our history, observe, was never particularly remarkable for reining in the sudden ebullitions of his fancy. The scene had tickled his fancy so much, that, after every one else had decorously resumed the form of countenance which seems to say, "Well, what comes next?" he had thrown himself back in his chair, roaring, till the tears literally began to trickle down his cheeks.

Tom Sparkle, who was the best-natured fellow in the world, endeavoured to divert the attention of the general, by affecting to be very much interested in the situation of Pen, requesting "to know whether he was subject to those hysterical affections;" and if so, prescribed a bumper of claret, in which he should be happy to pledge him.

Pen saw his object, and immediately lent himself to it by filling his glass, and bowing to the kind-hearted mediator. Politics were again introduced, although a new turn had been attempted by Sir Bland, who found this subject likely to interfere with the harmony of the party: but if the hoarseness of Catalani, in a few sentences, could open an inlet to the settlement of Europe, it is not surprising, that the mention of a new drill-plough should turn up the ground of labour, poor-laws, and magistrates, and through these, branch off to kings and ministers, opening the door to the various political opinions which seemed to prevail in this miscellaneous party.

Accordingly, the aforesaid plough was most successfully converted into a topic of attack and defence, in which the conduct of the war, the policy of the Allies, and the measures of our own government, were handled, I have no doubt, more in detail, and illustrated by infinitely more facts, than were ever canvassed at the sittings of the subsequent congresses at Vienna or Aix-la-Chapelle.

In all these, Sir Bland Blinkinsoph took that sort of part which would have puzzled an ordinary person to construe into any leaning, or political bias at all; but, to the more discerning, it was clear, that he was of too philosophical a turn of mind to approve of any thing merely because it was established. Nay, a very severe scrutineer might even perceive a tendency to disapprove them, upon this very account—so apt are liberal men, especially, to pique themselves upon shaking off one prejudice, by imbibing another.

During a temporary cessation of hostilities, which, in social divisions, as well as in its more technical application, is a convertible term for want of ammunition or resources on both sides, a Mr Peter Pliant, who had hitherto taken no part in the conversation, and was in the habit of recommending himself by flattering those who afforded him a seat at their table, seized the occasion to make a remark upon a picture which hung opposite to him.

"A very fine Guido that, Sir Bland!" shading his eyes with his hands: "there is a touch—an expression—a finish—a tone about that fascinating artist, which leaves all competition at a distance!"

"Unquestionably!" cried Tom Sparkle, gravely.

"There's no imitating him, sir: he may be truly called imitable."

"Not quite!" said the other.

"Nay, sir! I flatter myself I know a little of these matters."

"A very little," drily observed his next neighbour.

"More than he can explain, I'll be sworn," said Sparkle.

"You're a wag, Mr Sparkle!" cried Pliant, with a complaisant smile—intended to ward off his strictures. "You cannot, however, divert my attention from that morceau," continued he, with an air of enthusiasm—his hands hollowed to contract the light round his eye.

"I think—I could," answered Tom.

"Not you, indeed, my very good friend," rejoined the pseudo enthusiast.

"Look in your neighbour's face," cried Tom laughing.

He did look, and found such an ineffable expression of contempt upon the countenance of Sir Claude Plastic, who sat next to him, that his attention was, indeed, immediately diverted; and a look of eager enquiry succeeded to his fit of rapture.

"Why, my good Sir Claude, what ails you? you look caustic."

"Then my looks belie me," retorted the baronet.

"What would they express then, my worthy friend?" asked Peter.

"They should express admiration."

"Then they do lie abominably," cried the other laughing.

"Not when applied to an excess of presumption and folly—scarcely credible."

"Presumption and folly, sir!—I don't understand you."

"It would lessen my admiration, if you did."

"Do you mean to say, Sir Claude"—

"I mean to say, sir, that you know as much about Guido as —: but why do I talk to a pretender—who could mistake a VANDYKE for a GUIDO!!"

"A Vandyke!—a van devil!"

"A Vandal, you mean," exclaimed Sparkle, throwing himself back in his chair.

"Why, gentlemen," said Sir Claude, turning to the company, (for, be it known, *he* also had been watching his opportunity to introduce a topic upon which he considered himself quite at home, and was angry with Pliant for having forestalled him;) "no man, in the remotest degree conversant with the arts, could, for a moment, be mistaken in his judgment of these two artists. What this profound critic has discovered of the particular beauties of the one, he has transferred, with a marvellous want of discrimination, to the other."

"There's no bearing this!" cried Mr Pliant.

"Why, did you not, sir?—deny it if you can—did you not during dinner ask me the name of the artist? answer me that."

"And if I did—did you not tell me it was Guido?—There now, sir, answer *me* that."

"That unlucky cast in your eye, sir," retorted the other, "deceived me in the direction it took; and I pointed to the picture which hangs on the right hand of it."

Peter Pliant was posed, and when the laugh against him had subsided, Sparkle turned, with much gravity, towards the baronet, and said, "I doubt whether *that* is a Guido after all."

"*You* doubt! my good friend Sparkle! I admire your wit, your versatile talents, your spirit; but as to the arts—you must excuse me."

"I'll not excuse you if you are wrong," replied Sparkle.

"Wrong!" retorted the connoisseur; "have I traversed Europe to study the arts at the pure fountain-head—wept tears of joy and enthusiasm over the works of the sublime Michael Angelo, and the divine Raffaele—imbibed the Carracci at Bologna—worshipped Corregio at Parma, and insulated myself in Venice, to imbue my taste with the facinations of Tintoretto, Titian, and Paul Veronese—to be told by any man—that I am wrong?"

"Unless you get a patent for your errors," answered Tom, "you may"——

"Errors, sir! errors! I will trouble you to point them out—to point them out, sir!"

"No trouble at all," cried the provoking wit; "I only maintain that the picture before you is not a Guido."

"*You* maintain!"

"Yes! and I'll maintain it too," exclaimed the re-assured sycophant Pliant, who had taken his cue from Sparkle: "I'll bet you twenty guineas"——

"*You* maintain! *you* bet!" cried the offended connoisseur: "I've a mind to punish you by accepting."

"Done!" exclaimed Pliant.

"Done!" roared the connoisseur; who would have betted a thousand with the same readiness.

"A bite!" cried Sparkle: "it was painted by Blinkinsoph's grandmother."

"The whole board was convulsed with laughter. The tables were turned upon the connoisseur; and Pliant, as may naturally be supposed, elate with victory, was not very moderate in his use of it; for there is no man less reserved in his sarcasms than a sycophant—when he either changes his object—or finds there is nothing further to be obtained in the way of his vocation.

Sir Claude, however, would not submit to the decision, even after Sir Bland had nodded his assent to Sparkle's assertion; but, seizing a candle, gravely walked round to take a nearer view of the painting.

"Ho!" exclaimed he, rubbing parts of the picture with his finger, and smelling to it, then taking a wet doily, and rubbing again: "Ho! I see now! yes, yes, I was—I admit I was deceived! the light, the distance—yes, yes, I should have examined it." Then affecting to join in the laugh against himself, as he descended from the chair he had mounted, and replacing the candle in the branch, he added, "You are fairly entitled to your joke, Tom: and I willingly pay forfeit. One may see the thing with half an eye."

"With Pliant's half, I suppose," cried Tom.

"Oh! upon close inspection, there is no hesitation: well, well, I give you leave to make a good story of it, Tom, for Sir Joshna himself would have been deceived—at this distance."

"But not upon—*close inspection*."—remarked Sparkle, with a peculiar emphasis.

"No, no—he must be a bungler indeed, who could be deceived in the touch of Guido."

"The best judges," resumed Sparkle, with well affected gravity, "may be deceived by general effects."

"To be sure," returned the connoisseur, taking out his pocket-book, to pay his bet, with the most complacent good humour.

"What will you give me, Sir Claude," asked Tom, "to make the bet bubble?"

"Bubble! how?"

"Have you closely examined the picture?"

"Yes, yes, closely enough not to be deceived."

"The face?"

"Every touch."

"Then bet Pliant, double or quits, that it is a Guido."

"Do what? come, come, sir, you have had your joke, and be satisfied with your supposed victory; you are not likely to foil me again at my own weapons."

"Not unless you are beaten out of them," cried Sparkle; "*then*, you know, they are lawful prize—and may be turned against you."

"You want another bet, Tom," answered Sir Claude: "you play for money—I for character."

"It is natural we should play for what we are most in need of!" retorted the wit, laughing.

"I don't understand you, sir!" cried the baronet fiercely; who, in spite of his smiles, would, with great satisfaction, have kicked the whole company, for their share in the jest against him.

"I have the advantage of you, then," retorted Sparkle, with unabated good-humour; "and therefore advise you to save your *money*, at least."

"What! would you have me bet against common sense?"

"To be sure," answered Sparkle, laughing, "if there was a chance of your gaining it."

"Gaining what, sir?"

"Your bet, *of course*," replied Tom.

"I'll take you double or quits," said Pliant, "that it *is* a Guido."

"You'd take any thing for a Guido," cried the baronet.

"He took you, for example, *ma—Guida Ciecu!*" interrupted Sparkle.

"*Guido Reni*, you mean, I suppose," observed the connoisseur, with a look of contempt.

"As you like it—so twenty or forty guineas upon that picture being a Guido Reni."

"Psha! I should be taking you in, Tom."

"That would have novelty, at least, to recommend it."

"It will be picking your pocket, I tell you."

"And that would have greater ingenuity to recommend it than you are aware of."

"I know nothing about that; but this I know, that there is a homely proverb, which"—

"I'll give you—to save your delicacy," interrupted the other, "'a fool and his money are soon parted,' and *repeat* my bet in the face of it."

"I'll not spare you," cried the baronet: "by Heavens, you shall pay!"

"We are upon equal terms," said Tom; "for hang me if I spare you: so play or pay, say done."

"Done!" cried Sir Claude.

"Done! for a ducat," repeated Tom. "Now, Sir Bland," turning to his host, "inform us, if you please, how the bet may be decided."

"Certainly," replied Sir Bland, "it *is*—and it is *not* a Guido."

"How!" exclaimed the connoisseur.

"It was a picture which my grandfather purchased at Verona of a man, for an ancestor of whom Guido painted it; but having been neglected for many years, the whole of the drapery and background—being finished in his later and hasty style—was destroyed by the damp. The face, however, being fortunately preserved, and the picture being a known one—my grandmother, who was a native of Rome, and no mean proficient in the art of painting, undertook to restore the defective parts—and actually painted in the whole—with the exception of the face."

"What say you now, Sir Claude?" cried the exulting Sparkle. "Shall I repeat the proverb?"

"D—n the proverb, sir! Do you mean to insult me?"

"Oh dear no! I only mean to be paid."

"What! for a trick—an imposition?"

"No—for my discernment in distrusting your judgment."

"Why, zounds, didn't I say it was a Guido?"

"You did—but, unfortunately, took some pains to *prove* yourself in the wrong."

"Psha! I was entrapped by shuffling and false evidence."

"Evidence! good Sir Claude—taste ride off upon evidence! *vertu* hobble upon the crutches of authority! Why, you *smelt* conviction, and had your *taste*—at your finger's end."

"I'd have you know, Mr Sparkle, I'm not to be bantered with impunity; I'll surrender my taste to no man living."

"Don't be impatient, my good friend: 'pon my soul, I make no claim to it," said the incorrigible Sparkle.

"I'll not believe the story—it is a made-up—preconcerted"—

"Sir!" exclaimed the master of the house, with less than his usual urbanity.

"Be patient, Sir Bland," cried Sparkle, turning to his host; "Sir Joshua himself, you know, might be deceived—at a distance."

"So he might," returned Sir Claude.

"But not upon '*close inspection*,'" retorted the wit.

"I flatter myself," said the baronet, "I flatter myself"—

"That's right, stick to that," cried Tom, interrupting him.

"What's right, sir?" demanded the baronet.

"Why, to flatter yourself; for even Pliant there can't flatter you now."

Here the virtuoso threw down his pocket-book on the table, and desired the winners to help themselves; swearing at the same time they might divide his whole fortune among them, if

ever he put it in their power, to call his judgment again in question. He ordered his carriage, and bowed contemptuously to the host, adding at the same time, that he was prettily rewarded for wishing to pay a compliment to his grandmother, at the expense of his own taste; "he knew the daub to be a piece of patchwork from the moment he entered the room."

Waiting for no explanation, he retired amidst the shouts of laughter, which those who witnessed, as well as those who won, by the scene, could not restrain, even within the bounds of good-breeding.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE gentlemen now joined the party in the drawing-room, where Pen, delighted with the good-humoured spirit of Tom Sparkle, attached himself to him, as a nomenclature for the various guests who were now beginning to assemble; for he appeared to know every body, as well as every thing. Tom, who perceived that our hero was new upon town, with infinite good-humour bore the shackle, and became for some time a listener to what was going forward, rather than the mainspring to set things in motion, which was his more habitual employment. Pen's attention was soon drawn towards one of the many little parties, formed in modern evening *conversazione*, asked his companion the name of a tall, sallow-faced man in black, who appeared to be preaching to a select circle of ladies.

"He is literally employed," answered Sparkle, "in preaching to a string of converts, whom he hopes to convert from the church to the tabernacle, unless he can first convert the church itself into one."

"He is, I suppose, then," said Pen, "a Methodist parson."

"Rather a church-militant," cried Sparkle; "he is a colonel who, a few months back, returned from India with an overgrown fortune, of which the most ingenious of the speculating tribe could never discover the source."

"Perhaps he is instructing his converts in the mystery."

"*Tout au contraire*," answered his lively companion; "he is inveighing against the pomps and vanities of this wicked world with all the zeal of an anchorite."

"Then he has surrendered his ill-gotten riches!"

"Not a bit of it. He makes more converts by his good dinners than by his long lectures."

"Are, then, his auditors dupes or hypocrites?"

"Both," answered Sparkle; "they are dupes to his professions of sanctity, and hypocrites to avail themselves of it. He is a bachelor, sir, and professes to be a marrying man."

"What!—that skin of parchment?"

"You've hit the mark—it is the skin of parchment, which, when lawyers engross, they can convert into a material, which throws the Apollo or Antinous into shade."

"Would any one of those young and beautiful creatures prostitute themselves to such a pagoda as that for money?"

"Lord bless your simplicity! He might buy any woman in the room for a fraction of the balance he has brought home with him—that is, I mean, in an honourable way."

"And can parents be brought to tolerate such sacrifices?"

"Why, who the deuce should dress out the victims but the parents themselves? Not one of those girls but is acting under the inspection of her dearest friends; nor is there one that wouldn't be saint or sinner, according as the market stood."

"Nay, nay, Mr Sparkle, I hope you are exaggerating now."

"I hope I am from my soul," answered he; "I am bad enough, and no one can say worse than I think of myself; but I never hang out false colours; perhaps you will moralize, and say it would be more decent that I should do so. If that's the case we differ, and there the matter ends; but I know the character of that man pretty well; he has the ruin, the misery, the cry of the childless and the orphan in his ears and on his conscience; he has children of his own whom he leaves to poverty and contempt, and dependants who are galled by the weight of his oppression; yet this hypocrite has made his way into the best society, as the promoter of all charitable institutions—a reformer of the constitution and public morals—a declaimer against the corruption of manners—an oracle among the would-be saints—an impugner of church doctrines—and the leading orator of bible societies!"

"Does he profane with impunity such holy things?"

"They are open to all parties; no questions are asked. Your subscription is considered an ample guarantee for your character and principles."

"And is a sacred institution thus"—

"There is nothing sacred about the institution; for all that is really good upon the surface has long ago been done by the church."

"They disseminate the Scriptures—do they not?"

"That part of the topic is not fitted to our present discussion. They do disseminate the Scriptures; but in a manner to render them subservient to their own schemes. But enough;

the whole is a theatrical stage-play, where the performers are as regularly announced, and their performances puffed and paid for, as at Covent Garden or Drury Lane. Those who have not talents or integrity to make their way to legitimate honours, become heroes on these minor boards; and the managers give such large salaries that there is little doubt they will, by dividing the country, effect *their* reform!"

"Reform!"

"Yes," continued Sparkle, "the reform of our great great grandfathers under the First Charles, which imposes the honour of martyrdom upon the dissentients."

"And are these societies really," asked Pen, "so heterogeneous a compound?—accessible to all principles?"

"Or no principles," replied Sparkle. "Whatever sort of sentiments you may have occasion to propagate through its agency, the vehicle is ready prepared, like the mail-bag, to give it currency and effect. Look at that man near the window there; he is one of the most active supporters and orators of the society, and is at this moment entertaining the young gentlemen and ladies around him with the brilliant sallies of Voltaire, and simplifying the deeper sophisms of Diderot and Mirabeau for their edification. He is an avowed freethinker."

"You describe monsters, sir," exclaimed Pen.

"I describe Colonel Tattoo and his worthy colleague holding the extreme ends of the same pole. Look," continued Sparkle, "d'y'e see yon bevy of females, with a lack-a-daisical looking parson, and dandy physician, acting as bottle-holders to the lady who is declaiming?"

"She is beautiful and animated," cried Pen, interrupting his friend: "there can be no false colours there at least."

"You are right for once, I believe; she is very sincere in her conviction—of inspiration."

"Inspiration! What!—a Pythoness?"

"For shame!" cried Tom, laughing—"odi profanum vulgus. She believes herself to be a favourite recipient of grace, and is dealing it out retail to her listening auditors. She travels through the country, preaching what she calls *the Word*. She bribes the poor into a conviction of her gifts, and makes temporal rewards the means of spiritual conversion. To the rich and gay she opens her doors; and, availing herself of the forms of society, gives spiritual routs, and Gospel *conversazziones*, where the gossip of the day is relieved, at intervals, by the exposition of a chapter in the Bible, and an exhortation—'out of season.' Her parties, in general, are crowded; but the same faces seldom recur. Those who really feel impressed with the solemn duties of religion, cannot endure a repetition of such mockery; and those

who are beyond the influence of sound notions on the subject, vote it a *bore*. So that those who find the benefit of her ladyship's protection, and admire the elegant economy of her table, are her only steady disciples."

"What a perversion," cried Pen, "of the blessings and the faculties which Heaven has bestowed upon us!—But I see our host has left the infidel orator to attend to her ladyship."

"Oh, yes, and will soon join the majority which are lauding that black-headed demagogue, who is adorning rebellion with the attributes of patriotism, to a sickly group of Liberals on the ottoman there."

"Is Sir Bland then so versatile?"

"He is so general, at least, that every leader of every sect, political or spiritual, considers him, if not a disciple, a favourer of his tenets. He is verily—all things to men; and, without a principle of sound morality, or a shadow of religious faith, to guide or influence him, he extends his liberality to the encouragement of every excess, and the perversion of every institution, human and divine. He is indifferent to every thing but his own popularity. He has great power and influence, because he is very rich; and if he is less mischievous than he might otherwise be, it is because nature has given him a cold constitution; and, in order to keep well with all parties, he finds it necessary to maintain a tolerant moderation upon all topics, which nature has kindly enabled him to do, without much sacrifice. He does good, but never 'by stealth;' and I take upon me to say he seldom 'blushes to find it fame.' This is his real portrait—look for it, painted by the world. He is a philanthropist, and the most *liberal* being that A, B, C, or D knows in the world."

"You amaze me," cried Pen. "I dare not trust myself with the expression of my feelings."

Finding he was raising his voice, Tom Sparkle interrupted him. "You are wise; for, if I err not in my man, you have once before suffered for giving vent to your indignation, out of place."

"My foolish conduct, then, is known to you," said Pen, looking at his new friend with some apprehension.

"I wish such conduct were catching," answered Sparkle; "yet, until you have bitten a few others, you would here be run down as a mad dog. But pray, do look at the group assembled round that little bald-headed man at the fire-place."

"What the deuce has he in his hand?"

"A flea, perhaps, or a cockroach; but let us see."

They advanced towards the circle, which consisted of eight or ten very grave and scientific looking persons, who were listening, with the most profound attention, to the little person haranguing in the midst of them

The lecturer was nearly bald, having only a few grey hairs, which were carefully collected, and deposited in an old-fashioned rosette, or small bag, behind. His eyes were concealed by a huge pair of green spectacles, placed upon a nose which would not have had bridge sufficient to support this necessary appendage, had not the mechanical ingenuity of his optician contrived a mode of fixing them, by three or four joints, nearly encircling his whole pericranium. What his nose, however, desiderated in size, it atoned for in hue, and seemed to contain every particle of the colouring material of the philosopher's blood—giving the force of contrast to a most cadaverous and parchment-like visage; and, upon the whole, conveying to the spectator something of the impression of a stunted radish upon a Wedgewood plate.

His figure was such as to involve nature in the imputation thrown upon clumsy artists and poets by Horace; for, whilst his members appeared to be shrivelled and spare, his body corporate exhibited something like a sphere, the north pole of which seemed an abiding place for the philosopher's hands, when they were at rest, and the weight of which appeared to have overcome the resistance of his legs, which were most slavishly curved, like an old-fashioned cabriolet chair. The whole being clothed in a snuff-coloured coat and dittos, with a waistcoat of a former age, gave a consistency to the whole, which might set the minutest criticism at defiance, and, at the same time, afford infinite admiration to two young men, like Pen Owen and his companion.

This curious personage held in his left hand—supported upon the aforementioned spheroid—what appeared to be a small piece of glass or horn, upon which the forefinger of his right hand emphatically played during his harangue. Neither Sparkle nor Pen could discern any other object, but listened with all their ears to catch what evidently afforded so potent an interest to the circle of science.

"Yes," the philosopher was saying "yes, gentlemen, you are quite right: the pains and labour were intense. It cost me no less than five months, eleven days, and some odd hours, which are recorded by my amanuensis in the diary, merely to frame the apparatus, and, after all, I was compelled to begin *de novo*, for a new thought struck me."

"Ha!" exclaimed an F.R.S., who had seized upon a button, "what was that, my dear Doctor Micronous?"

"It came into my head to inflate the vessels—to inflate them, sir!—but then the *quomodo*, the *quomodo*!"

"Swammerdam's Bristle Tube, Doctor?"

"Pshaw!—Swammerdam's apparatus was gigantically dis-

proportioned to my subject. It would have blown me to atoms, sir—to atoms!"

"What a capillary tube!" exclaimed one of his auditors.

"A cable through a needle's eye, sir," answered the doctor.

"No, no, gentlemen, I contemplated, through a succession of sleepless nights"——

"Well!" cried an impatient brother experimentalist.

"For six weeks, how"——

"To ——!" cried seven united voices at least.

"To bore a hair!"

"Bore a hair!" exclaimed Sparkle, who, screwing his countenance into a tortured expression of gravity and earnestness, in an innocent tone, asked, "whether it would not have been easier TO SPLIT IT!!"

"It might, sir, it might," answered the doctor, "and I have split thousands in the experiment; but what was that to do?—how was it to forward my object? I wish you to tell me that. You are young, sir—I suspect a novice in science."

Tom bowed his acknowledgment and submission, and the doctor continued; turning, however, with no small degree of contempt from a man who could imagine such an experiment new to the philosophical experimentalist.

"I had several hundred pounds' weight of human hair, particularly from Sweden and Lapland, by far the crispest and most proper for the experiment, as you know, gentlemen, which, together with a box of Arabian manes—which I obtained, by great interest, from the Dey of Tripoli—were baked, boiled, and exposed to the operation of the air, in every possible variety of order and succession, in order to extract, or exudate, if I may be allowed the expression, all the oleaginous and fuliginous particles likely to impede the projected operation of perforation. Now, you will hardly believe me, gentlemen; yet there is my diary again, in which each individual step is faithfully recorded—you will scarcely credit the fact, that, out of one thousand and fifty three perfect hairs, two only were perfectly cylindrical!"

"Bless me!" exclaimed the button-holder, looking aghast at that alarming piece of intelligence, which, be it known, appeared to interfere with, or rather wholly to quash a theory he had just published to the world, upon the origin and cause of the "*Plica Polonica*."

"What did I do in this dilemma, gentlemen?"

"Ay, what—what!"

"As if by inspiration, I recollected Derham's experiment on mouse hair!"

"Good—excellent!" (*exclamant omnes.*)

"After a series of trials, I succeeded, gentlemen—yes, succeeded in ascertaining a perfect, clear, and unquestionable perforation!—but"——

"But what!" cried several voices from the anxious group.

"I couldn't find a hair long enough for my purpose!"

"You should have fattened the mouse on *MACCASSAR OIL*," cried Sparkle, with a fixed and steady countenance—whilst Pen drew the fierce attention of two or three neighbours by the noise he made, in stifling a more threatening explosion.

"Pshaw!" and a look of the most sovereign contempt, was all that Sparkle obtained for his observation—not that his real intention was suspected; but that Maccassar oil was not to be found among philosophical expedients—and he was considered a very ignorant and uninitiated person.

"Wouldna Muschenbroek's forceps haave answered yer paarpurpose, doctor?" asked a young Scotch physician who looked over the heads of half the philosophers.

"Forceps, sir, forceps!" exclaimed Professor Micronous, some of the nasal tint dispersing itself for a moment over his cheek, and giving it a hue still more ghastly; "Forceps to take up the parts—of an imperceptible—punctiform Monad!"

Sparkle felt that to witness, and to resist the impression of the scene any longer, would be vain, he, therefore, in a tone of desperate solicitude, which was too highly wrought to endure beyond the exertion which gave it birth, requested, as he had not benefited by the early part of the lecture, Doctor Micronous would have the condescension to acquaint him with the nature of the object, upon which his mind had been so inexhaustible in its resources, and so copious in expedients.

"The object, sir!" returned the doctor, with a look of unaffected surprise, "why, this to be sure!" holding up his left hand.

"I see nothing," said Sparkle, stooping to hide his efforts to be decorous.

"Nothing!"

"Nothing but two pieces of glass."

"Talc, sir, talc!"

"I see nothing else, I mean," said Sparkle.

"How should you?"

"Sir!" ejaculated Tom, and looking up with really unaffected surprise.

"It requires our most powerful microscope."

"Oh! I beg pardon," said Tom, "I thought you were exhibiting."

"Exhibiting! to be sure I am! What would you have more?—I aver, that what I hold now betwixt my finger and thumb,

the immortal Swammerdam himself, would have given his eyes—to possess.”

“I think he might,” observed Sparkle, still maintaining a demure demeanour, “since he would have lost nothing by the exchange, in this instance, at least; but, my good sir, I am ignorant of these things.”

“Ignorant, indeed!” replied the doctor, interrupting him.

“I acknowledge it,” returned Tom, “in all humility; but may I request to be informed of the nature of this imperceptible—impalpable—result of all the pains, labour, toil, and patience, to which you have subjected yourself for its production.”

“What!—what should it be,” exclaimed the doctor triumphantly, “but the most perfect dissection—inflation, and distension—of the *PROBOSCIS* of the *TABANUS* or gad-fly!”

There was no standing this; Tom Sparkle lost every trace of forbearance and assumed gravity; he could contain himself no longer; and as for Pen—he roared till he cried with laughter; so that the various groups of mixed science and literature which were spread over a long suite of drawing-rooms, were disturbed and attracted by the clamour and turbulence of the two friends.

All attempt at explanation was for some time ineffectual; for the philosophers, who saw nothing to laugh at in the learned doctor's experiment, attributed the disturbance to simple inebriation on the part of the young men, and gravely shifting their position, resumed the lecture.

The new-comers looked with astonishment at each other, being struck with a phenomenon so rarely exhibited in polished circles—as that of a hearty and unrestrained abandonment to what is enjoyed among the vulgar, as a hearty laugh. Even the merriest of the votaries of Momus, however, are subject to the weaknesses of human nature; its exhausting convulsions are necessarily transitory; and the features of Pen and his companion were at length sufficiently reduced to their ordinary proportions, to enable them to afford some account of the origin of their involuntary ill-breeding; but, before it was half told, the recollection, and a peep at the retiring group, reproduced the fit—in which a considerable proportion of their auditors, who were *not* philosophers, joined to the utter confusion and interruption of that good order, which is, and ought to be considered, as indispensable among gentlemen and ladies, who condescend to substitute dilletanti dialogues, and scientific small talk, for the eternal babble of great routs—or balls and suppers.

Tom Sparkle, however, had the advantage in his own set—which was only circumscribed by all that was fashionable and gay in town—of being listened to, and applauded to the full as much as his rival Dr Micronous in his; and he might have

encompassed himself with much the largest *class* in the assembly, had he been disposed to continue his readings upon what was passing. But this was not the hobby of the night. There was something congenial in the disposition and manner of Pen, which attracted him; and he felt disposed to read many traits of his own character, which possessed the raciness of novelty and the charm of originality, in his companion. He continued, therefore, to withdraw with him from the surrounding party, and to renew his observations upon men and things, as they passed in review before him.

Just as Tom had taken our hero's arm, and was advancing into another room, Pen pointed towards an individual who was paying earnest attention to the conversation of a dowager, and observed to his friend, that he had scarcely ever seen a countenance expressive of so much good sense, and, at the same time, so much urbanity.

"That," said Sparkle, "is the most popular man at this moment in London."

"What!—is it"——

"Oh, dear no—a very different character: the gentleman is Sir Daisy Dumbell: nature has given him, as you observe, a most prepossessing exterior, which he has employed to the best advantage, without ungratefully endeavouring to spoil it by too much attention to the inside. He is a *parvenu*, who has raised himself to rank and distinction, and is even reported to be in the new batch of peers."

"You speak in enigmas," said Pen; "is his genius so surpassing, that it has forced its way without the toil of cultivation?"

"No—he is no genius, and has not even cultivated his dulness: he possessed, however, from the cradle, an intuitive insight into the universal passion of mankind, and from being the darling of the nursery—has become the idol of the world."

"Has the universal passion been decided upon, then?" asked Pen smiling.

"Not by philosophers, perhaps," returned Tom, "but by a much wiser class of persons—men of the world; and they have ascertained that flattery—in some shape or other—is the key to every man's heart, from the peer to the peasant."

"Then he is a sycophant, like Pliant, with whom we dined to-day."

"As unlike as—the doctor there and myself. He has *listened* himself into the favour of mankind and womankind."

"Listened himself!"

"Even so—he listens to the philosopher and the pedant with an earnestness of attention, and with a countenance of such

intelligence, that at one and the same moment he convinces them of his own powers, and his admiration of their superiority. He never exceeds a well-introduced ejaculation of perfect assent, or a monosyllable, expressive of entire conviction. With the statesman, a shrug and a nod are all that is required; and I know an instance of one of our most popular speakers, who, after an hour's audience with this incomparable actor, declared he was the best informed man in the three kingdoms—although he literally had never opened his lips between the first salutation and certain cordial expressions on his departure. With the soldier he may do any thing, for he listens with apparent delight to the history of a campaign he knows by heart;—the anecdotemonger, he can twist round his finger, by an assenting laugh, or groan at tales, that he has told himself, or heard by anticipation from twenty other different sources;—the lawyer he will attend without a yawn, or even a vacancy of countenance, on the most dry and intricate cause—his hostess, through the whole gossip of the neighbourhood, with the gaze of new wonder, at each slip—the widow's list of her grievances, with a scarcely suppressed tear—and of a miss *debutante*, of her lovers and her conquests, with the most sympathetic interest. He will look condolence with a discarded minister, and smile congratulations towards his successor: he will never blink an eye, through the most tedious tragedy or poem that ever was rehearsed to a suffering victim, or even laugh but where the author expects it, in the most vivacious comedy. In short, he is the common friend of mankind; I might say the common sewer, for he is the depository of all the grievances of all mankind, who are sure of his sympathy, and certain of never being thwarted in their resolutions and plans, upon which they consult him. As he puts every man in good humour with himself, so he is esteemed, in turn by every man, in the point of view most in favour with his own notions. He is by turns, or rather altogether—for there is no detraction on any part—the most learned, scientific—handsome—well bred—discerning—intelligent—kind hearted—benevolent man in the world; by which, under each separate designation, he is considered inferior only to his immediate panegyrist—to whom his own modesty, after the example of the heroes of Greece, constantly assigns the first place."

Pen was very much amused with the account of this popular character; and having contrived to overhear part of the conversation, which was passing between the dowager and this gentleman, he found him, with an expression of countenance which would have done honour to the philanthropist, about to burst open the prison-house of oppressed virtue, or suffering

heroism—listening to a tale of “says he,” and “says she,” and a long account of a Marlbro’ breed of puppy dogs, which he rarely, but at well calculated intervals, interrupted with “Admirably retorted!”—“Charming!” until the old lady arriving at a climax, was ready to kiss her auditor, for the look of enquiry, which seemed to express disappointment, that there was no more to be heard!

Pen was too much disgusted, even to repeat the laugh, which Sparkle’s mode of illustrating the character had called forth. They proceeded onwards, Tom speaking and making some odd remark or observation to, or upon, every one they encountered.

“You know every body,” said Pen.

“Yes,” answered Sparkle, “and every body knows me—you understand,” continued he, with a sigh, which sigh was not lost upon our hero, and added not a little to the interest which his new acquaintance had awakened in him; for he suspected that, with all his vivacity, and all the admiration which his ready wit attracted, he was not a happy man. Tom, however, gave him no time to follow up the reflection; “I may in return observe,” said he, “that you seem to know nobody.”

“No,” answered Pen, “I’m a stranger in London: and ever since I have been here, my object has been rather to avoid than seek society.”

“That’s a bad plan; you can’t read a better book than that which this great town opens to you.”

“Nor a more dangerous one, I suspect,” returned Pen.

“Nay, for the matter of that, you may read as you run; so that you may run—when you’ve read too much.”

“Is that so easy?”

“I mean to try, some fine day,” answered Sparkle, half seriously and half jocosely: “shall I introduce you to some people?”—

“Not at present,” replied Pen, when turning his eyes towards an opening door, he saw, to his great surprise, his friend Modely.

“Good heavens!” said he to his companion, “if there isn’t Modely the bookseller.”

“To be sure—he’s every where; he is the Mæcenas of literature—is he not in his element? By-the-bye, he is talking to Lady Bab Cento about you—or me.—No. I’m sure you are the subject. What!—have I detected an author in my Tyro?”

Pen then, as usual, informed him of every thing that had passed between Modely and himself, and was proceeding in his eulogium, when Sparkle interrupted him.

“You were observing, not five minutes ago, that you had not an acquaintance in the room.”

"I spoke the simple truth—with the exception of our host and Modely, who has entered since."

"And his name is legion," said Tom.

"How?"

"I will bet you the profits of your next poem."

"You had better bet what it may be worth."

"You stole that, my friend; but"—

"Like the gipsies—have disfigured it, to make it pass for my own," cried Pen laughing.

"Stolen again—and from the same shop," retorted Tom. "but I *am* now ready to make a large bet, and therefore offer to stake to the amount of your next offering—that, before ten minutes are passed, you will be acquainted with half the room."

Pen stared—and was in the act of demanding an explanation of his words, when Modely, pushing his way towards our hero, and holding a hand of Lady Bab Cento—bowed to him, and expressed "her Ladyship's *most anxious* desire to become acquainted with Mr Pen Owen!"

He was so astonished at the abruptness of the introduction, that the laugh which had spread from Sparkle's eye, and just reached his lips, was arrested, and finally checked by the flow of eloquent and refined panegyric, bestowed by Lady Bab upon our hero. Before he could sufficiently collect himself to return a properly arranged acknowledgment for so unexpected an honour, he was completely separated from his companion Sparkle, by the intervention of male and female intruders, who approached him amid shrugs and whispered intimations—evidently referring to himself.

Three antiquated dowagers succeeded each other in their desire to be introduced to Mr Pen Owen—whilst a beautiful, but slatternly girl—with a roll of paper in her hand—declared she "had been long *most earnestly* waiting for an opportunity of being personally known" to our hero.

Before Lady Bab, to whom more deference appeared to be paid—as Pen afterwards understood, because her rooms were larger, and her accommodations more appropriate, than those of her rivals—was quite shut out from the object of her immediate worship, she had slipped a card into his hand—which, if he put a wrong interpretation upon for a moment, did not the less shock and surprise him—when he really ascertained its purport.

When the ladies had satisfied their anxious desire of *sounding* Mr Pen Owen, they were succeeded by a crowd of gentlemen, who, if they were more decorous in obedience to certain laws, the breach of which are attended with some hazard—were certainly not less warm in their expressions of regard, in acknow-

ledging the honour conferred upon them—by being made known to Mr Pen Owen.

Three brilliant stars of British growth, four continental, and one Maltese cross, were of the number of his professing admirers; and Pen, unconscious of what he felt, or what he ought to feel—whether it was a sort of practical hoax, of which he had read some account in the newspapers, or that his confinement, by order of the House, having got wind, had raised him into a seeming patriot, as in the instance of Buckthorn, he could not divine. The idea of being selected as a poet, or that genius, real or usurped, was the order of the day among would-be critics and amateur dangles on the muses, was too remote, and out of the range of his calculations, to be entertained for a moment. He kept, therefore, retiring, and bowing, and smiling, receiving cards in all directions and of all dimensions, till he had fairly backed himself to the chair into which Tom Sparkle had thrown himself, in a convulsion of laughter he neither attempted, nor could have succeeded, in checking.

Pen seized him by the arm, and entreated him to rise and afford him some insight into the scene which had been passing around him.

“For Heaven’s sake, sir, tell me what am I to think of all this?—stand off, gentlemen. Mr Sparkle, is this intended as an insult—or a farce—or is it”——

“Hush, hush,” whispered Sparkle; “bow away your worshippers, and then sit down quietly, whilst I edify you with all necessary circumstances connected with your apotheosis.”

Pen, after some labour and much difficulty, made good his retreat, having abstained from fixing upon any individual to answer for the impertinence, which he could not still avoid conceiving had been, in some shape or other, intended against him.

“And now, my dear sir,” throwing himself in a state of exhaustion into the next chair, “for pity’s sake let me know why I am thus selected as an object of ridicule or impertinence, and how I may set about obtaining some satisfaction?”

“Why, my good Mr Owen, you have been crowned in the capitol!—the laurel wreath was woven by your panegyrist Modely, and has been placed on your head by her most blue majesty Lady Bab Cento—the paragon of patronesses, the very pink of Della Cruscan critics. To be noticed by her ladyship—to be of her select parties—to be in her train, is to be seated in the saddle of Pegasus, and installed in the temple of fame. Grub Street—no longer Grub Street—is a well furnished, well appointed hotel at the west end of the town; and no man who can spell, and write his name at the foot of a title-page, need now want a dinner or a patron—wire-wove paper, and hot-

pressed sheets, like a forcing house, can make the rankest weed blossom like an exotic, and what is wanting in vigour is made up in mawkish morality, or in unintelligible mysticism. The trade, I assure you, is now carried on by well-bred gentlemen, and by all classes of most decent and well-mannered personages in clean linen and purple clothing; and if any one of them fail as an author, he is sure of being entered as—A CRITIC. Not a few of our modern writers have risen from a state of condemnation to the elevated rank of literary patrons. The race of needy bards is extinct; and the scandal of neglected genius cannot certainly be charged upon the present age. To profess one's self an author is a passport to half the dinner-tables, and all the *conversazziones* in town—to be a successful author is to be a rich man—to be patronized by Modely is to secure a niche among the worthies of Great Britain."

"The devil! Has *he* made me his butt?"

"Far from it; his opinion has given you fame before you had earned it, yet he is seldom out in his man. I pin my faith upon him—in this instance at least."

"But is it to be endured, that without seeking or professing"——

"You should attain at once what others profess and seek for! Faith, I see no great hardship in all this. Why, you seem to be as much ashamed of the character of a poet as if you had lived in the antiquated period of the Drydens and Otways, '*et hoc genus omne!*'"

"The recollection of such names makes me blush at our degeneracy."

"Nay, reserve your blushes for those who neglected such men, and rather hail the period when, if indiscriminating vanity, assuming the form of enthusiasm in its patronage of literature and the arts, commit many egregious blunders, and crown with false meed the abortions of mediocrity, true genius and the aspirings of genuine wit can no longer lie hid, or be obscured"——

"Well," observed Pen, rendered somewhat calmer, and more reconciled to his new honours by the good-humoured arguments of Sparkle, "I must make the most of my fame before my trash has stamped my demerits. But what am I to think of this same Lady Bab Cento, who sat next me for two hours to-day at dinner, and never condescended to ascertain whether I were a blockhead or a wit?"

"Your name wasn't up, and that of your rival who so engrossed her attention was. He had written a copy of verses, which have been handed about for this week past in manuscript; but if she had met even *him* yesterday, you might have stood your ground against him."

"As how?"

"As thus: it was only just before her ladyship dressed for dinner, that Sir William Troufleur informed her that Lord Ombre had said, they were the lines of a man of genius."

"And is Lord Ombre's judgment the great criterion of excellence?"

"For the last three weeks—indisputably."

"You talk too oracularly for me," smiled Pen.

"I speak more truth than oracles usually do," retorted Tom, "for nothing reigns in this good town beyond the limits of a month. Public opinion would stagnate, and stink in our very nostrils, if the changeful eddies of fashion did not agitate it at periodical intervals."

"Am I to infer, then, that the rage for his lordship's poetry will be as short-lived?" demanded Pen.

"No; that may live some time longer, by a rapid supply of novelty; or the more politic threat of smothering his muse."

"Smothering! What can you mean?"

"His lordship's occasional threat to favour the world with no more of his poetical rhapsodies."

"The morals of the world, at least, would not be injured were he to keep his word."

"Tis that, perhaps, which induces him to break it from time to time," retorted Tom; "for he professes to hold our goodly world in no great esteem, and its morality in less."

"How revolting to our best feelings!" exclaimed Pen: "this perversion of genius bestowed by Heaven"—

"For that Heaven's sake," interrupted Sparkle, "reserve your criticism for a fitter occasion; at present it is rank heresy; and if you are heard, which you appear resolved to be, you will assuredly be banished from the circle, to which you have just been raised by acclamation."

"But what," continued Pen, in a more subdued tone, "what must be the consequence of such a man holding the rank of patron?"

"He a patron! you mistake the matter altogether. He couldn't eat without a patron of his own."

"A British peer—need a patron!"

"Oh, dear, no—only a British poet. Letters, you know, acknowledge no titles—they form a republic of their own"—

"And like all republics are"—

"Venal, you would say, and say truly: and Modely's purse is dictator."

"Is he the patron?"—

"Of his lordship—most assuredly."

Pen looked astonished, but said nothing. At length, Lady

Bab Cento, in passing to her carriage, which had just been announced in thunder, and re-echoed up the vaulted staircase, repeated her hope of being honoured by Mr Pen's Owen's attendance at her select parties; to which he bowed in silence, and again turning to his Asmodeus, observed—that if what his friend had said were true, this lady, with all her pretensions, formed her judgment only at second hand.

"There again, at your old Grub Street notions. We have now every thing at second hand, except our clothes, and there lies the important change in the constitution of society. Do you think, if this woman judged for herself, she wouldn't have found you out at dinner?"

"I doubt whether she would," said Pen, laughing; "but I am such a novice, that I should hardly suppose a professed critic, and patron of letters, would openly borrow the scales, in which *others* had placed the weights."

"You haven't hit the figure; justice was running in your head, whilst instinct would have better suggested the expedient."

"Instinct! as how pray"——

"Do you remember the proboscis of the gadfly dissected by the microscopic skill of our friend Dr Micronous?"

Pen laughed.

"These arbiters of taste," continued Sparkle, "possess the same sort of organs; and like the doctor's, their greatest ingenuity is displayed in keeping them out of sight."

"I'm too dull to comprehend you," sighed Pen.

"And too blind to see Micronous's *Tabanus* without an instrument—but I am behind the scenes, and will be your microscope. Drawers of water and hewers of wood are, in spite of their ancient origin, still low-lived beings; but there are fetchers and carriers of another description, who sleep on down, and live on the fat of the land. These are your male and female *antennæ*, or *feelers*, which are thrown out before our great devourers of authors, to pick up and convey all the literary, political, and private gossip, spread over the surface of the town. Why, sir, there's not a good thing uttered, or a *faux pas* committed, between Westminster and Hyde Park Corner, in the morning, that isn't carefully docketed, and laid by for use in the common-place books and escrutoires of these literary com-morants, by the evening. The opinions of A, B, and C, upon a new play—a new poem—or a new pamphlet—are safely lodged in this choice repertory, before there is a chance of one of these learned arbiters of taste being committed by an unwary criticism. Sometimes, indeed, upon a sudden defect, or stoppage in these sources, an unfortunate question may be unexpectedly started; and as prompt decision is the very quintessence of superior

judgment, an answer must be returned. The great resources on these occasions are found to be an oracular ambiguity on the part of the presiding divinity, or an opinion which, with a little ingenuity, may be subsequently twisted in any manner most suitable to existing circumstances; such as, 'I have merely looked it over—I hardly know what to say—there are certainly some good things;' or, 'I know something of the author, and it would not be fair to influence public opinion one way or another.' Thus, by an admirable display of cautious criticism and polished candour, his lordship, or her ladyship, is enabled to take advantage of the first wind that blows, in order to sail with the general current."

"And is Lady Bab a woman of character?"

"That is rather a Gothic question; but I will tell you in confidence—she is a very phoenix of chastity, and, therefore, consumes the character of every other woman—in the flame of her own purity!"

"I mean to ask, is she a moral woman?"

"Why, 'as to morality, brother Joseph,' a woman, who has no feeling to gratify, but that of personal vanity and ambition, to which she would sacrifice every tie in life, has little merit in preserving a decorum she has no temptation to infringe, and which it would be ruinous to outrage. I never heard that she committed murder, or even petty larceny—except on literary subjects: but I believe it would be equally difficult to detect a single act of real charity or benevolence."

"She may write her own epitaph for me," cried Pen, indignantly.

"She has done that already; and, if not framed, glazed, and hung over the parlour chimney, like that of Goody Primrose—it is at least fairly transcribed, upon smooth vellum paper, and decorated with stamped allegories of her implied virtues."

"What! an epitaph before death!"

"It is on her *virtues*," returned Tom, laughing.

"We live to learn," sighed Pen; "but what we gain in knowledge, I fear, we lose in enjoyment. Fashion, or not fashion, however, I am resolved, never to barter my independence, nor to sacrifice my own judgment to the world's opinion."

"And yet there is a chance of the majority being right, in the long run."

"Why," cried Pen, in one of his energetic starts, "you would not recommend a blind conformity with the world?"

"I never defend extremes, much less blind ones," replied Sparkle, "I can take my cheerful glass, without becoming either a sot, or a milksop. But a truce with your *argumentum ad hominem*. I at least shall never stand its application. We

must stick to generals ; your '*tu quoque*' is a dangerous bone-breaker."

"I stand corrected," said Pen, smiling. "Men who live out of the world are too prone to egotism. Speaking generally, however, I cannot reconcile, even to my own inexperience, this dependence upon others for the exercise of our reasoning powers."

"There, again, you fancy you are treating generally of a power which exists only in partial instances,"

"What ! reason—that distinguishing"——

"Nay, nay," cried Sparkle, interrupting him ; "spare your definitions ; man is for the greater part a gregarious, not a reasoning animal. The majority could not reason—if they would ; and the few who can reason are too indolent to undergo a task, when they find it ready done to their hands. When I see a flock of sheep, forcing their way over a fence, or through a hedge, after a blind bell-wether, I always think of my two-footed brethren in their scramble through the world."

"I presume," said Pen, with an assured air, "that however inexperienced I may be, there is as yet no infallible standard from which bulls are issued and anathemas thundered *in terrorem*, against heretics."

"There, your inexperience presumes too far, I can tell you," retorted Tom ; "there *is* a power, compared with which, the thunders of the Vatican, in its best days, would sound like a pop-gun in our ears."

"Hey ?"

"Before which kings bend ! under which senates quail ; the multitude bows its many heads ; and the individual, whilst he contributes to support its worship and pamper its ministers—trembles even at his own fire-side under the tyranny it exercises."

"You are, indeed, laughing at me now," cried Pen, with a countenance which betrayed a half-formed suspicion that Sparkle was bantering him.

"Not I, on my soul," returned Sparkle ; "the power exists, and exercises its fullest tyranny, without an effort on the part of its subjugated slaves to shake it off. They hug their chains, and glory in their servitude, whilst they roar their lungs out in proclaiming their liberty."

"You are not speaking of this free country, Mr Sparkle ?"

"The despotism I speak of could exist only under the forms of freedom ; for it is an excrescence, engendered on the body of freedom itself."

"I think I can follow you now," cried Pen ; "at least, I suspect your allusion is to the freedom of the press."

"No," retorted Tom, "not to the *freedom*, but the *licentiousness* of the press. Look yonder, do you see that gross, unwieldy, shapeless mass of a man—growling and dogmatizing before a group of lordly listeners?"

"Good Heaven!—it is"——

"Saurcraut—do you know him?"

"He was a sort of tutor of mine," answered Pen, still gazing with astonishment at seeing him in such society.

"Your tutor!" exclaimed Sparkle.

"Not exactly!" said Pen, hesitating for words in which to explain the circumstance, without impeaching his father's judgment.

"Nay, you need not blush at the connexion; you may at this moment behold half a score of peers and commoners paying their homage to this high-priest of the British Inquisition!"

"You amaze me!"

"That's my duty for the night; it is nevertheless true as it is amazing. This man, without offence be it spoken before his pupil"——

"Oh, never mind me; you can't hold him in more contempt than I do," cried Pen.

"Contempt! for shame! look at his train-bearers; but this man, having tried every means, supplied by a half stock, or fractional share of knowledge, in almost every branch of literature and science, to save himself from absolute starvation, was, a few years ago reduced to his last shilling and his last shift; when certain politicians, having a hard campaign in prospect, and a scarcity of hands among their followers, pressed into their service this adventurer, ready and willing, to libel a world which he execrated, and to stand prosecutions, and brave the laws, provided, for such were his terms, 'they would make it worth his while.' They bought him—set him up—extolled him, and puffed him, and quoted him, until, like the luckless wight, whom some distorted intellect of the modern school has represented as the fabricator of a MAN from rotten bones, they are reduced to become the very slaves of the idol they had themselves put together, and are now mere puppets in his hands, and worked at his will. From a beggar, he is raised into a voluptuary; and supports a table and a carriage, by instructing the people of England how to estimate their public institutions, and their public men."

"But who," cried Pen, "are his dupes?"

"I tell you—his patrons—and the people."

What! are the reasonings of this man so cogent—so convincing"——

"He never reasons at all; he dogmatizes, and colours the

prejudices of his party into principles, and boldly coins their calumnies into facts."

"And are the people fools enough to swallow this?"

"This! my good sir, they'd swallow any thing, provided the pill be gilded, and you will swear it is a panacea for all political grievances and burdens; in which are included kings, priests, and—no, not prophets: for that vocation is usurped by themselves, in order to cheer their followers with the blessings of approaching destruction. The nearest cut to an Englishman's heart is the affectionate assurance of his standing upon a mine ready to be exploded."

"You speak of the rabble."

"A portentous majority, including those *with*, as well as without"——

"Without!"

"*Culottes!*"

"But men of common understandings"——

"Go on the common way."

"They will not believe black to be white."

"If it is in black *and* white they will, to a surety—nine out of every ten—ninety-nine out of every hundred. A *printed* authority is gospel to the multitude."

"Why," cried Pen, "I would rather"——

"I know you would; but you are running into your old heresy. I speak of these things in general; the individual exceptions are too rare to affect the rule. I myself—for I am ashamed to say I have a sneaking kindness sometimes for a practical joke upon the wisecracks of this great town—I myself have, more than once, written some of the grossest absurdities that ever entered the imagination of man, with facts too incredible for the unsophisticated reason of a child—I have dropt my production into the lion's mouth, always gaping for news—and I do solemnly assure you, that in endeavouring to expose the very absurdities which originated in my own prolific mind—I have been beaten off the field with weapons furnished by myself, and scouted as a sceptic for opposing my own nonsense in *print*. Why, my good friend, take your dinner with my Lord Duke, in Grosvenor Square—or with his Grace's shoemaker, in the Strand—with my Lord Mayor, at the Mansion House, or his worthy relations, in Chicken Lane or Rag Fair—you will find that no man is to be found bold enough to blaspheme the omnipotency of the press. A few—as there will always be dissenters from an orthodox creed—and, by-the-bye, you might soon be spiritualized into a leader—a chosen few may, I say, venture a random shot occasionally; but the blindness or cowardice of the many, and the never-failing lash of

the offended power, either reduces them to silence, or brings them upon their knees to cry *Peccavimus!* An orator, from the senate down to the veriest seditious-shop, in the shape of a debating society, acknowledges this tributary allegiance; and, whilst he boldly blasphemes his Maker, libels his sovereign, and sets all law at defiance, rarely omits to laud and magnify *the liberty of the press*, and the GENTLEMEN who conduct it."

"Paltry fellows!" interrupted Pen.

"Nay, they cannot help themselves; they must yield to the current, or they will be swallowed up. Heaven does not visibly interpose—the king cannot avenge himself; and the laws supply the means of having their own ends defeated. The press alone has power, and the arbitrary exercise of it."

"I would perish first!"

"Again, I must remind you, I am not speaking of *you*," retorted Sparkle, smiling; "I speak of men who, by birth, accident, necessity, or intrigue, are doomed to take a part on the public stage of life; and when you recollect that not only every word and action may be falsified, but the basest motives assigned to the most meritorious conduct, by those who can force the world to believe any thing they affirm—it is not surprising that men should prefer to concede to, rather than provoke, a power that is omnipotent in its influence upon society, and has no check upon its full and inordinate exercise."

"A tyranny, with a vengeance!" exclaimed Pen, who altogether forgot there was a single ear in his neighbourhood, beyond that of his brother interlocutor.

"A plague on your zeal!" cried Sparkle, smiling; "be quiet, or you will be stripped and flogged before you are aware of it."

"I flogged!" exclaimed Pen again. Some of the several parties formed about the rooms turned their eyes towards him.

"Nay, nay," whispered Tom, "if you will sin with your eyes open, I must leave you to yourself. Newgate is nothing to this."

"I beg your pardon," said Pen, in a lower tone: "but, on my life, I can scarcely restrain my indignation."

"But you must, or your lease will be a short one."

"Why, my good sir," asked Pen, "why cannot all this be set right? Why does not some particular man rise up, and dispel the illusion?"

"Give the philosopher a standing-place, and he will raise the world; but where is this place to be found?"

"Truth will always make its way."

"Not where it is the interest of so many to keep it under a hood. What are a few sharpshooters, with even General Owen at their head, to do against a standing army, and a citadel bristled with artillery? Why, it was only this morning a friend

of mine, whom I know to be desperately, though secretly, in love with his first cousin, was congratulated by half a dozen of those nondescript animals yclept dandies, upon his approaching nuptials with Lady Betty Delford, who sits yonder, flirting with a guardsman. He laughed at it as a joke; but, when more seriously charged, denied it upon his honour. I fell in afterwards with the same group, who were discussing the point. I affirmed my knowledge of the whole being unfounded. My testimony was disregarded, though I was known to be his confidential friend. 'I am certain it is true,' cried one. 'I knew it long ago,' said a second. 'Why, he hasn't been returned from Spain a week,' observed a third. 'And Lady Betty is only just imported from Ireland,' cried a fourth. 'Nonsense! I tell you they'll be married in a month,' swore a fifth. 'I'll bet you a thousand he never marries her,' exclaimed I, out of all patience. 'T'would be bubble, Tom,' said another unit; 'for I *know* it to be fact.' 'There! there!' re-echoed through the ranks. 'How do you know it?' roared I, in order to make myself heard. '*Why, it was in the papers this very morning!*' This was decisive; and yet there is not one of these men, who were all ready to stake their lives or fortunes upon the event, but knows, as well as I do, that, for a fee of ten shillings and sixpence, (I believe that is about the present market-price,) they may insert in these very papers the first piece of folly or malignity that may suggest itself to their minds."

"This is wilful blindness—a fatuity unintelligible to me. Surely, after this exposition, I never can become the dupe of such impostures. My eyes, once opened, cannot be closed again upon such a scene of trick and base imposture."

"And yet," asked Tom, with an arch look, "are you *quite* sure when, to-morrow morning, you read an account from the banks of the Rhine—or, perhaps, a private communication from a Paris correspondent, or a letter from Constantinople—are you quite sure you may not be induced to believe that they actually arrived by the last mail?"

"Oh! on points of that nature, my scepticism may be allowed to slumber."

"And yet, at a hazard, I will venture to say, that the several writers shall never have stirred out of their garrets in the Strand, unless to receive orders from their principals, or to ascertain which way the wind *was* to blow."

"Impossible!"

"Fact; and I have no doubt those men there at this very moment of time—see how they are laying their heads together—are settling what news the good people of England are to receive, from more than one quarter of the globe to-morrow

morning, in aid of some noble lord's or honourable gentleman's speech in the evening."

"Faith," cried Pen, "I shall begin to doubt whether my senses have not hitherto played me booty, and represented things topsyturvy upon my sensorium."

"No, no; trust to your *own* senses, and you will soon find your way; but you must begin to walk before you run."

"I see I am a fool," cried Pen, apparently vexed with himself—"still,—still, I cannot believe that, when such a flagrant violation of every principle, necessary to the preservation of good order, and even to the moral relations of life, is once known, it can be successfully carried on, or at least continue for any length of time in force."

"Now, I will undertake to prove, before this goodly assembly, the simple fact, that about forty or fifty persons (few, very few of whom are even educated men) monopolize the daily press in this metropolis. I could bring them individually before this court, and, upon actual evidence, show that, with the few exceptions I am disposed to make, there is not one whose opinion you would feel satisfied in taking, as the rule of your most ordinary actions—who could throw light upon any question of research in literature or science—who is either what is properly called a scholar, or a man of general information. I say, I could prove this before the goodly assemblage now standing around us to-night—prove it to their full conviction—and yet to-morrow, I would stake my existence, every man, woman, and child of this well-dressed and well-trained party would, unhesitatingly, quote, under the imperial pronoun of 'us,' the *printed* opinions of *these very men*, as an authority, in the face of facts passing directly before their own eyes."

"This is almost incredible!" exclaimed Pen, with distended eyes.

"Incredible!—why, I verily believe, looking at you now, I should make those eyes of yours dart from their orbits, were I to detail all that I could say to you upon this head.—But the company is dispersing, and we must be off: only take this with you, by way of moral or application from this my lecture *one*, that you may write yourself *up*, or your enemy *down*, at so much per cent; or, if your ambition soar higher, you may, at a fixed market-price, shake the throne to its foundation, or raise any scoundrel you choose to fix upon for the purpose, on the shoulders of the multitude, to fame and distinction—to the breach of every principle and every law binding upon society."

"This is downright slavery!" cried Pen.

"It is the *LIBERTY* of the press," drily answered Sparkle, "as rendered in modern language, and illustrated in modern prac-

tice;" and, taking Pen's arm, was about to leave the room, when the latter, perceiving their host, Sir Bland, approaching, thought it necessary—being yet a novice in modern etiquette—to make his bow *en congé*. As he advanced for this purpose, he observed a little man, with a grizzly black head, take a button of the baronet's coat, and, in a low tone whisper, loud enough, however, to be heard by our hero—"I really am surprised, my good friend Sir Bland, that you can tolerate that crawling, toad-eating creature—that ministerial hack, Tweedlem, in your house: it is really almost a personal insult to your visitors."

Sir Bland smiled; but, taking his guest by the hand, whispered in turn, that "Tweedlem certainly was *not exactly* the man he should choose for a friend; but that he had good points—and you know, Mr Twaddlem, we must not sift human motives too scrupulously."

"But, but—you always must have a *but*. I tell you, sir, he is a disgrace—a slur—a blot upon any society in which he is admitted; and I know no one"——

"But my good Mr Twaddlem"——

"The deuce take your *buts*—I beg pardon—good evening, Sir Bland."

His back was scarcely turned, when the proscribed Mr Tweedlem seized the hand of Sir Bland, and shaking it very heartily, thanked him for the pleasure he had experienced in the course of the evening—adding, however, that he regretted to see, in so respectable an assembly, such an atrocious vagabond as that Radical Twaddlem. "Why, my dear Sir Bland, he has been kicked out of half the houses where he was formerly admitted, and is known (I speak from pretty good authority) to be deep in the plot of"——

"True, true," interrupted the baronet; "he is certainly *rather strong* in his political opinions; but we must make allowances."

"Allowances for sedition! for perjury! for"——

"Nay, nay," again cried the baronet, checking him; "Twaddlem is a man I know but little of; but, independent of a certain twist, he appears to be really a very good sort of man."

"A good sort of man, Sir Bland!—a being upon whose forehead is stamped, by public verdict, every crime that can degrade humanity!"

"I only believe half these things," observed Sir Bland, with a benevolent smile.

"Half! half!" exclaimed the other; "half would sink another man to perdition."

"True, true; I don't defend him—I only tolerate him; and you know, in society we must give and take."

"If that's the case," retorted the other, with no small asperity,

"you will pardon me, Sir Bland, if in future *I* decline to meet him."

"Nay, nay!"—but Mr Tweedlem had followed the steps of Mr Twaddlem; and Sir Bland concluded, by turning to Pen and his companion, and observing, that it was a sad thing to find prejudices *still* so powerful in enlightened society, as to separate even the worthiest men, and retard the efforts of philanthropy to bring things *more on a level*.

"Pray, Sir Bland," asked Pen, with an emphasis which alarmed Sparkle, "which of these is the philanthropist? they can't both"—

"You are young, my good friend," replied Sir Bland, with perfect complacency; "and it must be a work of time to dislodge the prejudices of education."

Pen was about to rejoin, when Sparkle, hurrying him towards the door, observed to Sir Bland, that he had been removing many of Mr Owen's prejudices in the course of the evening, and had no doubt he should soon make him a fit companion for either Mr Tweedlem or Mr Twaddlem.

Sir Bland smiled his satisfaction, and the two friends left the room.

In going down St James's Street, Sparkle stopped at Brooks's, and shaking Pen heartily by the hand, told him he was a good fellow, and that he should like to be better acquainted with him. Pen returned the sentiment, and then asked him if he lived at that house?

"No," said Tom; "but I can't live *without* it: however, there's not much play at present."

"Play! What, is it a gaming-house?"

"O fie, no!—a subscription-house."

"But do you play?"

"Only occasionally—that is, when my occasions call for it."

"For Heaven's sake, reflect"—

"That is the very last advice you should give *me*; but this is no place for lectures or explanation. I am pledged to pay twenty guineas, to save a widow and her children from infamy and disgrace, by twelve to-morrow; and I don't know where to find half the money, unless, *by chance*, it be to be found here."

"Here, here!" cried Pen, "take my purse."

"No," answered Tom, laughingly; "I'm not reduced to take a purse yet."

"Accept it—borrow it!" said Pen, in a tone of enthusiasm and anxiety.

"No—you are guilty of a very young trick: I'll set you right when we meet next. So adieu, and thank your stars your money is your own." So, darting in at the door, he left Pen wondering

at the concluding scene of a series in which his eyes had been marvellously opened, and which left him puzzled how to account for a man, with a full knowledge of all the knavery and chicanery of the world, so unphilosophically thrusting himself into what his still confined view of things taught him to believe was the focus and concentration of them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HE wandered down the street, full of these wise reflections—and turning mechanically into a coffee-house, whose gay light attracted his attention, and finding himself thirsty from the heat of the assembly, called for some wine. A bottle of claret was placed before him; and forgetting to dilute it, he drank off more than one large goblet of this light and grateful beverage, which, added to the rather copious libations of the previous dinner-table, occasioned an unusual flow of spirits.

Walking up and down the room, still moralising as he walked, he perceived a folding-door just ajar at the end of the passage, from which issued the sound of billiards—a very favourite game with our hero, and one in which he fancied he was no unskilful proficient. He entered the room, and was at first rather abashed by the rude stare which his presence occasioned; but assuming a fiercer air as he advanced, he was soon satisfied that nothing uncivil was intended. But suddenly recollecting, that his friend Sparkle had mentioned a subscription-house, he began to suspect that he might have improperly intruded upon forbidden ground. Making up, therefore, to a gentleman who stood nearest to him, he requested to know whether this was a subscription-house?

The question occasioned a stare; but quickly composing his features, this person informed him that it was not—that the rooms were open to all gentlemen of character and respectability. This was sufficient for Pen, who immediately directed his attention towards the players, and was quickly absorbed in the interest of the game.

At a critical juncture, when the fortune of the day appeared to rest upon a single hazard, the striker paused and offered some bets, which were doubled and redoubled round the room. This, of course, occasioned much clamour, and a noise of “hedging,” “odds,” and all the technical terms of the sacred mystery of chances. Pen, who thought of nothing but the game, added to

the turmoil, by an attempt to quell it, calling out "Shame! shame!—let the game go on. How can the gentleman have fair play?"

"Fair play!" cried a fierce-looking man, who had been among the most noisy, and was now noting his bets in his pocket-book; "do you suspect any one here, sir, of foul play?"

"I suspect nothing, sir," answered Pen; "but that the gentleman can never win the hazard if there is such a"——

"Not win it, sir! I'll bet you two to one he does."

"Done!" cried Pen, fiercely, not liking to be brow-beaten; and immediately, as if by a charm, the storm was hushed. The striker played, and made the hazard without an effort.

"An uncommon fine stroke!" said Pen.

"Then, sir, down with the money; I thought how it would be," added Pen's opponent contemptuously.

"Of course you did, sir," answered our hero, somewhat ruffled; "or you would not have betted upon the gentleman."

"Do you mean to reflect upon me, sir?" demanded the other.

"Sir," replied Pen, in a tone and with a manner that seemed to produce the effect of calming the gentleman, "I mean neither to reflect nor suspect, nor do I desire to know any thing about you: the money is yours." So taking out his purse, he presented him—with a guinea.

"This won't do, sir—a guinea! I betted you forty to twenty."

"Gentlemen," cried Pen, turning to the company—"you heard the bet."

"Two to one," exclaimed several voices.

"Exactly so—I took the odds," said Pen, with a contented smile at the general decision; "and there's the guinea."

"This is not the guinea-room, sir," observed the marker very civilly.

"The guinea-room!" repeated Pen.

A placid, mild-spoken gentleman came up to Pen, and informed him that he was himself no better—but that the rule of the room was to bet *rouleaus*.

"Rouleaus!" exclaimed our hero, "and what the deuce are they?"

"A rouleau," replied the same gentleman, who retired from him with a look that spoke rather a contempt for his ignorance—"a rouleau, *every* greenhorn knows—is twenty guineas!"

"Twenty what?" demanded Pen, too much astonished and confounded even to hear the reflection cast upon him.

"Twenty guineas, sir," said his original opponent; "for which I will trouble you."

In vain did Pen appeal to the company; an extraordinary degree of unanimity appeared, all at once, to prevail in a society

that, a few minutes before, were at "daggers drawing." He was compelled to pay the money, which, with the exception of a single pound-note and a few shillings, was the whole of his worldly property.

He stamped and raved like a madman, cursing his own folly and rashness and declaring that the matter ought to have been explained to him. All was in vain, as he quickly perceived; for, after the money had been paid, every man seemed to be as utterly indifferent to what he either said or did, as if he were no longer in existence.

This, in itself, was no slight provocation to a man of Pen's high spirit, which he had always found somebody ready to oppose, or at least to encounter by reason or argument. Contempt he could not bear; and neither sober nor philosophical enough to ascertain the characters of the persons around him, he began to give utterance to his opinion of his adversary's play; that is, the beaten champion, upon whom he had lost his money. He declared, he had never seen a man capable of handling a queue, leave such a hazard open to his antagonist—"never, sir, never in my life!"

The insulted champion did not appear in the least offended with our hero; but, on the contrary, apologized for having been the innocent cause of losing him his money. He professed to play merely for his amusement. Pen was now very much surprised to find the whole party again interested in his cause: some avowing his opinion, and maintaining it with great warmth; whilst others equally tenacious, declared that they were ready to back the losing knight against our hero himself, if he chose to enter the lists.

Thus urged and goaded, Pen at length declared himself ready to engage with the man; and pulling off his coat, for the more free exercise of his arm, seized his queue, and prepared for action; whilst the other hung back, and appeared at last to yield *only* to the entreaties of his backers. Pen made no bets, though proposed on all hands with an eagerness and impetuosity that might have awakened his suspicions, had his mind been in a state better calculated for observation. He staked his last guinea on the game, which, he stipulated, should not be construed into a roulette: and having followed up several successful hazards, looked about him, and upon those who had been most clamorous against him, with a countenance, equally indicative of contemplated triumph, and contemptuous indifference.

His adversary missed a very palpable hazard, and the room resounded with shouts from the supporters of our hero. He again advanced, and making a very fine stroke, looked upon the game to be in his own hands. His opponent seemed in despair,

and remonstrated with his friends upon their imprudence in backing him, as they still seemed to do; taking, however, only long odds—as they were offered by the opposite party.

The person who had won the former bet from Pen, advanced towards him; and said, “now sir, I have no objection to giving you your revenge:—I’ll take two to one, if you are disposed to bet it.”

“I’m pretty sure, sir, of my game,” answered Pen, coolly.

“The odds are greatly in your favour; but I always take odds—it’s my way.”

“Not just now, sir,” retorted Pen.

“I went out of my way to oblige you,” returned he—with a curl on his lip, that roused all Pen’s angry feelings

“I acknowledge no obligation, sir,” observed Pen fiercely.

“Then you may retain it: to tell you a bit of my mind, sir, I think you owe your success more to your luck and your adversary’s blunders than your own skill, and”——

“Luck, sir!” exclaimed Pen with increasing ire.

“I repeat my words, sir, and I think you may be beaten, if Quash minds his hits.”

“That’s your opinion, is it, sir?” said Pen, with a sneer.

“It is—and I’ll back it with a cool hundred.”

“You will!”

“I will—and say done, first.”

“Then, sir,” began Pen, just about to close with his provoking challenger, “I say”——

“Hold, hold, Owen!” exclaimed a voice which penetrated through the conclave; and attracted all eyes towards the door. In a moment—Pen found Tom Sparkle at his elbow.

“Why the devil do you interfere?” cried the disappointed better; “what have you to do with it, Mr Sparkle?”

“My friend’s tied up,” answered Tom.

“Then by”——

“Hush, sir,” interrupting him, “I’m not to be trifled with. He shall *not* bet—finish your game, Mr Owen,” and Tom contrived to pinch his elbow, in order to silence his remonstrances, and prevent explanations. The opponent now struck his ball carelessly; and missed a very obvious hazard.

“I never saw you so much off your play, Mr Quash,” observed Sparkle, with a peculiar expression of countenance.

“I can’t score to-night,” answered he in a low tone of voice.

“So I perceive,” replied Tom; “you are *nervous*, I’m afraid.”

“None of your rigs, Mr Sparkle, for d—m me if I put up with them,” cried the meek and diffident Mr Quash, to the utter amaze and astonishment of our hero.

"Indeed!" answered Sparkle with a look of contempt, "I admire your spirit, but you had better reserve your fire for some more urgent occasion."—Pen stared. The man who had won the former bet, now strutted up to Sparkle, and told him, "he saw no business he had there."

"Business!" cried Tom, "no, I'm not in the firm."

"Sir," retorted the other, "I see no business you have"—

"Business! I tell you I come for pleasure!"

"I repeat, you have no right here to spoil sport."

"Not unless you make *game* of my friend."

"Of me!" exclaimed Pen, throwing down his queue, "and who the devil dares"—

"Hush! hush!" cried Sparkle, "I couldn't resist a bad pun; Mr Points is *so fond* of them."

"I'll tell you what, Mr Sparkle," cried Points—

"You had better not," returned Tom, "or I must tell you *where*.—Come, Mr Owen, you see you have won the game without much effort, owing to my friend Quash being *nervous*, which I hope was not occasioned by my too sudden apparition."

"I'll make you pay for this, Mr Sparkle," cried the loser, throwing down his guinea on the table to Pen.

"You shall have it with interest, Mr Quash," cried Tom with inimitable *sang froid*, "whenever you have recovered *your nerves*."

During this dialogue half the company had retired, and Pen and his companion were left nearly alone, standing in the middle of the room, when the latter taking his friend's arm, bowed significantly to Mr Points, who appeared to be the great man of the party. "It would be hardly fair to wish *you—a good night—now*."

"And why not, sir?" demanded that gentleman.

"Merely—because it is morning," replied Tom, laughing, "and so—a better night to-morrow, good Mr Points."

Thus saying, he drew Pen out of the room, whose imagination, big with the sense of some mysterious injury which Sparkle's manner and conduct had suggested, doubted whether he ought not to kick one or two of the company "*pour encourager les autres*."

When they reached the street, Sparkle could no longer resist his disposition to laugh at the adventure.

"Why, my dear, kind moralist," exclaimed he to Pen, "how the deuce came you—pregnant with a lecture upon the sins of play which I had not leisure to profit by—plunged in the next half hour—into the very depths of hell?"

"Of hell!" exclaimed Pen.

"Even so. Here, watchman," cried he, turning to one of

the guardians of the night, who was crying the hour, "what's that house?"

"That here's hell—as your honour knows as well as I."

"There" cried Sparkle, turning to our hero, "you see you've been to a place pretty notorious; and if I hadn't acted the part of Orpheus, and fiddled you out of it, there wouldn't have been much left of you by this time."

"Why, I thought a game of billiards"—

"Was a game of billiards, whether on earth or in hell—with a party of country cousins in the oak parlour, or a nest of rooks in St James's Street.—Believe me, Owen, if I had not come to your rescue, you wouldn't have had a guinea left in your purse,"

"I have but one," smiled Pen.

"What! were you fleeced before I came?"

"Fleeced!"

"Don't quarrel with the expression—you will be the first to adopt it, when I tell you that you have been in company—ay, and within the grasp—of a set of the arrantest scoundrels and sharpers in this abounding town."

"I should have trounced them, however, *if* you hadn't arrested my bet."

"How?"

"I must have won the game, as you saw—and that copper-faced fellow offered me a cool hundred"—

"Which he would have won as sure as"

"Won! why my opponent never made a hazard."

"To be sure not; he was *nervous* :—you understand me—or perhaps you do not—learn then, in plain English, that Quash is the best player in all England."

"Why, he lost a game before, in the most childish way."

"Any thing but childish, believe me—had you a bet upon it?"

"Yes, I took the odds, and lost twenty guineas—when I meant to bet one."

"What! the old trick of rouleaus?"

"Trick! why they all swore"—

"That's a trifle in the way of business—I tell you, my good man, and I know the scoundrels well, that Quash will give his adversary—be he who he may—six in a game, and beat him in a hand canter."

"And how is it, that you know these wretches so well?"

"I'm a cosmopolite," answered Sparkle, laughing, "and free of every state in society. I love to read the human character in all its stages, and could in ten minutes' walk, bring you into actual contact with the next order below the one we have just left, where cheek by jowl, you should take a sneaker of thunder

and lightning, or a bowl of toddy, with half the footpads—thieves—and pickpockets in town.”

“What! their haunts known, and yet”——

“Known! ay, and their exploits boasted in open day—no, I beg pardon—by rush-light; and that in the very heart, centre, and resort of catchpoles, bailiffs, and public runners, who hob a nob with them till they are *weight*, as they call it, and then in the most amicable manner possible, deliver them over to the hands of justice.

“Can such things be?” cried Pen, “you astonish me.”

“You’re a lucky dog,” cried Tom, “to have so much matter still left, either to amuse or astonish you—the fact is, nevertheless, as I have stated, but” as they arrived at Pen’s door, “since you have taken in so much in one day, it will be wiser to let that digest before I read you a second lecture.”

They wished each other good-night, and parted like friends who had lived in habits of friendship from the cradle.

The door was opened by the maid of the house—his servant being out of the way—and Pen ascended the stairs slowly, meditating upon the various incidents of the day, in which the loss of his whole fortune, with a trifling exception, was not forgotten. Condemning his own folly, he stalked into his apartment, in which he found two candles—burning, and spitting and flaring in the sockets—giving a precarious and uncertain light.

Feeling his way, he approached the bell, in order to call his servant to account for his neglect—when his attention was roused by that species of hard breathing, which, in the vulgar tongue, is called snoring. The sound evidently proceeded from the sofa, which stood rather in the shade, and quickly perceiving his own dressing gown thrown over the sleeper, Pen concluded it was placed there to cover the recreant body of his domestic. He snatched up one of the candles in order to ascertain the fact, but the motion extinguished the dying flame, and as he reached the sofa to seize the careless delinquent, the other candle—flashed and expired.

He, however, found his way to the delinquent’s throat, who, awakened by the roughness of the salute, bawled out in a strange voice lustily “Thieves—thieves, robbers and whiteboys! By the blood of O’Donnell, ye shall pay dear.—Arrah! now—cowards, rapscallions, a host upon one—but, by my soul, if I could see for the lights,” cried he struggling, and at length gaining his legs, for Pen in his surprise had let go his hold, “I’m your man now, my pretty boys,” and immediately began laying about him, so as effectually to remove Pen from within range of the weapon, whatever it might be, which he manfully wielded in his hand. “Come on, ye spalpeens!”

"What the devil do you do here?" exclaimed Pen, "and who are you?"

"Sure," cried the other, "you know as well as I do—for—by the memory of my mother, I know nothing at all about it, now!"

Pen shouted for lights, and as they began to throw their glare from the stair-case, through the open door, Pen perceived a tall muscular form, equipped in full regimentals, with his drawn sword in his hand, standing on the defensive, and staring as if he had been assailed by one of his native Benshees—for his country had at once been declared by a true and genuine Killenny brogue.

"What am I to understand by this, sir?" demanded Pen, in an angry voice.

"Upon my soul, sir," returned the officer, laying down his sword, and rubbing his eyes, "my understanding upon the subject is none of the clearest"——

"You are aware, I presume," retorted Pen, "that you are in my lodgings"——

"That may be," answered the stranger, "but I as never had the honour of seeing you before, I am just as wise as ever"——

"What do you know of this, sirrah?" demanded Pen of his servant, who had now placed three candles on the table.

"Only that this gentleman, sir, has been waiting for you for the last three hours."

"Well, sir," turning to the officer, "I presume you know why you have been waiting for me—and what your business is"——

"To tell you the truth, young gentleman, I am usually rather bothered by this time of day, though I don't exactly remember the hour—and moreover, and above all that, I am so little used to be called to account by any man, that I can only just now recollect that some scoundrel or other took me by the throat, as I guess—though I couldn't swear to it, as I didn't see it"——

"Scoundrel! sir—do you know to whom you are addressing yourself?" cried Pen, marching up to his opponent.

"I'm only waiting for that honour," returned the other, with great calmness, "that I may tell him a small bit of my mind."

"My name is Owen, sir—and the sooner you leave this room, the sooner you will afford me an opportunity of chastising your insolence"——

"Insolence is it! mighty well, Mr Owen—Mr Pen Owen! Och! I have it—it's all as light as day again—and I must just take leave to observe, with your good permission, Mr Pen Owen—that you have another little business to settle, before I can have the honour of talking to you on my own account—

Och, I have it now at my fingers' ends—and I'll settle it all in the twinkling of an eye."

He then in his own peculiar manner informed our hero, "that he, Colonel O'Donnel, had been honoured with the commands of his friend, Lord Killcullane, to request his company in a field, near Bayswater, on the following day, at any hour most convenient—his lordship being at leisure—and having nothing particular on his hands"—

Pen could not at first clearly comprehend what was meant, but after several interrogatories, which more than once had nearly induced the colonel to forget his lordship's priority of claim upon the person of our hero—he ascertained that this officer was the bearer of a challenge from a man, of whom he had never heard—and to whom, he felt conscious, he never could have given offence.

"Here is some mistake, sir," said Pen, "so far from lord what's his name—having"—

"What's his name, sir?—do I apprehend you? am I to repeat Lord Killcullane"—

"Well sir—Lord Killcullane—so far from giving him any offence"—

"Offence!—Och! good now—what signifies that—if he has taken it—what can it matter to you at all—to know *le pourquoi pour le pourquoi?*"

"But, sir—I am unacquainted even with his person"—

"Och! now what's the use of knowing his person—it's better sure than pinking an old friend—d'ye think I should have had more satisfaction in cutting down the Invincibles, if they had been my particular acquaintance?"

"Sir, sir," cried Pen, impatiently, "he is equally ignorant of mine."

"So much the better for him—but I believe, young gentleman, you are a little mistaken in that particular—for he pointed you out to me, though you were, to be sure, in masquerade!"

"Masquerade!—I see, sir, here is some egregious mistake—and I must insist upon your leaving this room."

"No, by the powers," cried the soldier, "unless you just put your name to this slip of paper, acknowledging your contrition, with a full and ample apology!"—

"Apology!—I'd see you and Lord Killdevil"—

"Hush, hush, my little sprig of shelaly, for I love your spirit—and long for a little play myself—it is Lord Killcullane, not Killdevil! at your service"—

"Pish!" cried Pen, foaming with rage, "I care not who he is, or what he is: I only repeat, I know him not—that I never was at a masquerade—and further,"—

"No further, my jewel!—let me only ask a question, which might be doubtful now, to be sure—when I look in your face"——

"I'll not"——

"Yes; you will—sure you need not be ashamed of it; but pray—excuse the question—pray, do you shave to get, or to get rid of, a beard?"

"By all that's holy," roared Pen, "I'll endure it no longer," laying his hand upon the colonel's arm.

"A small bit longer, by way of explanation," returned the cool soldier, gently displacing Pen's hand; "sure now I only want to prove my lord's acquaintance with you."

"And what has that to do with my beard?"

"Nothing more or less, my jewel, than the whole question; for if you neither shave for a beard, nor to get rid of a beard, you are not my man; but if you are in the habit of displaying your beautiful physiognomy, like the summit of Sleugh Donard after a snow storm, at yon window, why then, by the powers, his lordship pointed you out to me in masquerade."

Pen now recollected the circumstance of his having seen the person who had so mortally offended him in Kensington Gardens, watching him at his window, and retreating from the colonel a few steps, "Ha!" cried he, "have I found a clew?"

"Oh! a mighty pretty clew," answered the other, "as you would wish to find in a long summer's day."

"Yes, yes, sir," exclaimed Pen, "I discovered my man! What! Major Irwin—you know Major Irwin, that insolent"——

"No, 'pon my soul; I wish I did, sir, for your sake. It would give you another clew, if you escaped the two first."

"He is your employer, sir; I know it. He it is"——

"Hark ye, young gentleman; I'm the best-tempered being in the world, and never gave a man his *quietus* even, but in the politest and best-bred manner possible, as you shall find when I have the honour of succeeding to my Lord Kilcullane; but on these occasions a man can't be too cautious in the selection of his phrases—that of any created man being the employer of Colonel O'Donnell is objectionable—and by my soul"——

"Nay, sir," answered Pen, who felt the impropriety of the expression, "I beg your pardon"——

"Not a word more, sir; I am satisfied *quoad* the term."

"You know not the injuries I have received from that man, sir."

"Injuries is it? Och! that point's easily settled, sure; and when the little affairs upon our hands are disposed of, as may be, I shall be most happy to offer you my services in that way; but, sir, it grows late; order is the very soul of business, and as you cannot sign this little bit of paper"——

“Sign it, sir!”

“Och, to be sure not—I’d be sworn you know better than to do it. It remains only to name the hour most pleasant to you. Any friend you may bring with you will settle the details without loss of time. It’s a delicious little spot—a perfect paradise, sure, for a snug rencontre, where no varlet of a magistrate can spoil sport, as we say.”

“Well, sir,” cried Pen, “if it must be so”——

“Sure there’s no *if* in the case, honey dear.”

“I will say four o’clock in the afternoon, for I have still a friend to find.”

“Och, now I’ve taken such a fancy to you, Mr Owen, that if his lordship was otherwise provided, and I hadn’t myself afterwards to talk to you, it would give me the greatest pleasure in life to offer you my services.”

“Sir, I feel your kindness and consideration, and now”——

“And now you wish me gone. You have hinted that more broadly before; but no matter, I wish you long life and a merry one, sir, and am your most obedient humble servant, till the death of one of us.” So saying, having deposited a card with a clear description of the place of meeting, he took his departure, whistling all the way down stairs, “St Patrick’s day in the morning.”

Pen’s thoughts and reflections, if we could get at them, would, I suspect, prove to have been none of the most delightful; but lest the reader should suppose him to have been lukewarm upon the subject of the pending rencontre, it may be necessary to state, that he was still fully possessed of the notion that this Lord Killcullane was, somehow or other, connected with Major Irwin, and gloried in the opportunity of venting his indignation upon him, even at second hand.

It was the fate of our hero, as it has indeed been that of many other young gentlemen whose passions have not been regulated under some sort or species of scholastic discipline, as well as those who have not benefited by it, to give way to first impressions, and to consider every check or impediment calculated to remove or palliate them, as additional insults and offences against the dignity of their nature. We are to hope that the seeds of religion, occasionally watered by the sage lectures of Mr Mapletoft, and the active benevolence of his uncle Caleb, were not yet obliterated; but the series of rash adventures in which our hero had been involved since he became his own master, certainly prevented their springing up—at least in the right season.

In the morning Frank Wettenhall appeared at Pen’s breakfast table, having a morning paper in his hand, in which he imme-

diately pointed out an advertisement, evidently inserted in answer to that which he had published on the preceding day. It ran thus:—

“E. C. is so fully acquainted with every part of P. O.’s conduct, that an interview could now only tend to degrade E. C. in her own estimation. E. C., therefore, begs leave to decline all further communication with P. O.”

This was decisive. Pen raved and stormed against the villany of mankind, and the feebleness of womankind, till want of words or breath extended him at full length upon the sofa. Wettenhall did all he could to console and to reason with him; but it was like oil upon a flame, and, had he been as intemperate as his companion, Lord Killeullane would have been forestalled in his claims upon the body of our hero.

“What!” cried he when he could again speak, “is the woman—is this being to whom I have devoted my heart and soul from the very cradle, to yield to the machinations, the falsehoods, of some base calumniator! What have I done to merit this? What are the crimes laid to my charge? When have I failed in my duty, at least to *her*? Here is villany, sir!—villany and rascality somewhere—it cannot be the work of chance. Discarded, abandoned by my first and best friend, for being the lover, the worshipper of this being; and then to be equally contemned, abhorred, and cast away by her, for having robbed myself of peace, friends, happiness, food, and rest, in order to find out and rescue her from the hands of an unknown ravisher! Is it by Ellice Craig that I am to be reproached for excesses into which my raging love for her alone has hurried me? Is there no victim to be immolated at the altar of her worship but the wretch who has raised the temple to her divinity? Oh woman, woman! how unjustly have I accused the poets who painted thee false, fickle, and tyrannical!”

It would be as little edifying as amusing to the reader to listen to a rhapsody, or rather a series of rhapsodies, relieved at intervals by the exhaustion of nature, and bursting forth again with the strength of a giant awakened from his slumbers.

For nearly two hours Wettenhall endured it all in patience, and almost in silence; nor was it likely the current of his thoughts or invectives, admitting, like steeple music, of so many changes and inflections, could have been diverted into a new channel, had not the card of directions left by Colonel O'Donnell fallen under the observation of Wettenhall, who, availing himself of a pause, asked what it meant, and to what sort of meeting it referred. Pen's attention was immediately

roused, and his irritable passions seemed soothed by the prospect of a new appeal to them. Never having felt himself in so happy a state of mind to sacrifice his life personally, because he never was in a more improper state to surrender it, he informed his companion of the particulars of the previous evening, and abruptly requested that he would attend him to the field.

Wettenhall appeared to shrink from the proposition, without absolutely declining it, which was sufficient to excite the utmost contempt in our hero's breast. He was incapable of attributing the hesitation of his companion to any thing but rank cowardice. He apologised, therefore, with a countenance that clearly indicated his suspicions, and added, that he should go immediately in pursuit of Tom Sparkle, whose services, he felt satisfied, would not be refused.

"Are you acquainted with Sparkle?" asked Wettenhall with an air of some surprise.

"He is the best friend I have on earth."

"What a prodigal!—a"——

"I have told you, sir," cried Pen interrupting him, "that he he is *my* friend;"—a strong expression, considering that his acquaintance with him was not yet of quite four-and-twenty hours' standing.

"I merely"——

"You must merely speak of him as *my* friend, sir," shouted Pen, in a fiercer tone; "a friend, sir, who will not shrink from standing by me when I need his services."

"Surely, Mr Owen," answered Wettenhall, "you have mistaken my purpose. I only—I wished merely to observe upon the hastiness with which you were about to precipitate yourself into this duel, an evil which society tolerates, but which religion, moral"——

"A truce, a truce, sir, with your reflections; this is no season for them."

"No season! at the very moment when forgetfulness of duty *may* be attended"——

"Zounds!" cried Pen, "do you wish to drive me mad? What have I to do with duty? with—My brain—my brain—I cannot stand it"——

"Pardon me; I did not intend"——

"Intend!" exclaimed Pen, interrupting him; "do you intend to refuse me the only benefit in your power? Will you, or will not accompany me to the field?"

"I will!"

"Enough!" and now the note of preparation only was heard. Wettenhall retired to make some arrangements; the day advanced, and the hour of assignation was at hand. He returned

with a hackney coach. Pen's pistols were carefully smuggled into the vehicle, and the driver directed to Bayswater. He spoke not during the drive; and his companion, thus suddenly involved in the consequences of his rashness, seemed as little disposed to break the silence.

Having arrived at the spot indicated in the card, they perceived three gentlemen advancing towards them from an opposite point, two of whom Pen immediately recognized to be the stranger of Kensington Gardens, and his late visitant, Colonel O'Donnell: the third gentleman was presented as his lordship's surgeon, who would be ready to attend either party in the event of accident. Colonel O'Donnell took Frank Wettenhall aside, and simply proposed the distance and the mode of firing, whilst the latter intimated that there might be some means of settling the business, without proceeding to extremities.

"Extremities! my good sir," cried the colonel, "why surely you wouldn't retreat after taking so much trouble, and coming so far?"

"I think, sir," observed Wettenhall, "that some explanation might prevent mischief."

"Mischief, do you call it!—Och, sir, I perceive you are new in the business; and if it wasn't for fear of offending you, on which subject I am mighty scrupulous, I should say by the paleness of your visage"——

"Sir!" exclaimed Wettenhall.

"Be patient, till we have dispatched our business—I have said nothing, mark me."

"I ask, sir," said Wettenhall, "whether it is not usual, in such cases, to prevent bloodshed if possible?"

"Not in my country, sir," gravely answered the Colonel.

"Is there then no alternative?"

"None that I know of, but submitting to terms of degradation, which is known here, I understand, by the term apology, for which we have no equivalent in native Irish."

"Come, come," cried Pen aloud; "surely, gentlemen, there is no necessity for this delay."

"There, my jewel," exclaimed the colonel, turning to Wettenhall; "didn't I tell you not to lose time? Take your ground, my Lord—ten paces—and fire together."

In an instant both pistols were discharged, and Lord Killcullane lay extended upon the ground. Pen threw away his weapon and flew to the spot. The surgeon had already raised the wounded peer, and the blood flowed copiously from his side.

"I am a dead man," said his Lordship; "Mr Owen, you have behaved like a man of honour, and"——

"Like an assassin, rather," exclaimed Pen. "Why is this? How has it happened?"

His lordship was disturbed by the ravings of Pen, and requested that he would provide for his own safety. Pen refused until he had his lordship's forgiveness, protesting his readiness to apologize for his share in the unfortunate misunderstanding.

"Pah!" cried Colonel O'Donnell; "what use of all this bother about nothing?—sure you have both behaved like men of honour, and apologies heal no wounds."

Lord Killcullane said a few words to Pen, which satisfied both parties that there had been no intention of offence on either side, and that one of them was dying, and the other might be hanged, simply because our hero had chosen to walk without a companion in a shady alley of Kensington Gardens, and his lordship to walk *with one*, whom Pen's intrusion kept out of sight.

His Lordship suffered much from his wound, but making an effort to speak, entreated Pen to secure his escape, expressing his conviction, that, in the event of his death, his father would prosecute his antagonist with unrelenting severity.

Wettenhall at length succeeded in hurrying our distracted hero off the field; and conveying him to his own lodgings, which were in Wigmore Street, he dispatched a messenger to Bury Street, for Pen's servant and baggage.

The champion and his esquire sat down to collect their scattered thoughts, and to arrange the best mode of eluding the officers of justice, in the event of a pursuit. One single obstacle prevented an immediate departure for the coast; but then it was singly sufficient to have withstood an host of obstacles on the other side, being neither more nor less than our hero's fixed and determined resolution, to live or die in London, as long as he felt assured that Ellice Craig was within its precincts. What then was to be done?—*Nous verrons*.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

It may so happen, that certain of my readers, who have indulged themselves in the habit of reading novels and romances, (a habit never sufficiently to be deprecated,) may have been led into an error respecting the nature of our present history, and the cha-

rafter of the work altogether. No author, however unambitious, is disposed to sit down patiently under imputations which in conscious pride he feels to be unmerited ; and there is no cause amidst the multitude which are said to operate upon the nerves of writers in general, which seems to me to be of so uniformly irritating a nature, as the possible inference that they are professed novelists or romancers.

We might, indeed, as a sort of healing plaster to the wounds of these sensitive patients, take upon us to derive works of this order from sources of high antiquity ; but the gentlemen (and ladies too) of whom I am speaking, would be as little inclined to condescend, I suspect, to measure their talents with an old Greek, or the more modern Troubadour or Trouveur, as with the professed pensioners of the Leadenhall Street Minerva.

That I may not be supposed to make gratuitous assertions, for the purpose of better substantiating my own claims, I beg to refer my kind readers (who will no doubt be ready and willing to obey the injunction) to send to their booksellers for fifty or sixty out of the number of those histories annually bestowed upon the public, which, by a vulgar and erroneous classification, are known, for want of a better, under the generic term—of novels. They will then have the further goodness to turn to each work separately, and if they do not find, either in the introductory *proema* or preface, or in the body of it, as regular a protest as was ever recorded on the “Lords’ Journals,” against all novels and romances, as well as all novelists and romance writers, I am content to forego the rank which this very argument is intended to determine and establish in my favour.

I do not mean to affirm that the same form of words is always preserved ; my Lord Duke and the Marquess of — do not express their dissent with the same forceful energy of expression against an act of ordinary legislation, as against those which are avowedly carried in their sheer despite, by corrupt or incapable ministers who sit opposite to them. Neither in the house of literary peers (for no author is expected to acknowledge a superior) do the dissentient members preserve the same form or measure in their protests ? but, according to circumstances, and the degree in which their own interests seem likely to be affected by the question, a necessary variation is always observable. For example, (not that I mean to quote literally, *that* is the reader’s business,) if a heroine is necessarily, for the better conduct of the plot, to be guilty of any peccadillo or offence against the decencies of life, we are sure to be informed, that “her mind had been early contaminated by the trash of a circulating library.” When a parent, who is to be represented as a pattern system-monger, exhibits his whole stock of the

author's reading, he is made sedulously to warn his inexperienced ward, pupil, or daughter, against those "thumbed and dog-eared vehicles of corruption and nonsense, those pests in the world of letters, called novels." If a youth, in supporting the character assigned to him, is caught rambling by moonlight, or writing sonnets "to his mistress's eyebrow," an apology is at hand, in due form, to show that his youthful mind had been poisoned by reading romances to a blind grandmother or superannuated aunt; and should any thing monstrous and unnatural call up the author to explain, he corroborates the fact by an assurance, that, improbable as it may appear to the inexperienced reader, real life produces as many wonderful coincidences and marvellous adventures as even the distempered imagination of a mere romance-writer could suggest.

Thus do they throw off to the greatest possible distance, all connexion and affinity with a class of writers, who, after all, appear from their own theory, to have no real existence, except in the obsolete instances of Smollett, Fielding, "*et hoc genus omne*" of scribblers, who were not ashamed to avow their vocation, and even seem to have gloried in the degrading title of novelists.

The great evil, which appears indeed to be irremediable under existing circumstances, is, that the public, in spite of all their protests, do most unfeelingly persevere in calling every work published under a particular form, by this odious and proscribed name, and until some legal penalty be devised, I confess I do not at this moment perceive how it can well be remedied.

The reviews to be sure might do something towards this desirable end, but the want of discretion in this department has frequently occasioned more harm than good; for we have more instances than one (by a venial, *certainly not* a venal, error of the press) of the review having preceded the work in its appearance before the public, and the style of the one being so identified with the other as to awaken the suspicions even of a public in general good-naturedly disposed to keep their eyes shut, whilst the conjurer arranges his cups and balls for their amusement; but—

"In pertusum ingerimus dicta, dolium!"

What I desire my readers to infer from all that has been said above, is, that I am no more disposed to submit to the degradation of imputed novelism, than my neighbours and fellow-labourers in this one particular department of literary exertion. That we are not to be thus ranked is demonstrable; for it can scarcely be supposed that we should employ our pens for the suicidal purpose of undermining our new productions, or holding up our

beacon-lights, as the "Society for the Suppression of Vice" do their lanterns, to show that we are the receptacles of all that is vile, seductive, and corrupting. This is conclusive, and must undeceive the most bigoted and least enlightened among those who have hitherto persevered in so gross and obvious an error.

My readers, therefore, must not suppose themselves at liberty to fidget and fret because *this* incident is not explained, or *that* apparent contradiction reconciled to their own peculiar views of the subject. They must take things as they come, and as they actually occurred in the history of our hero; who, by the by, is no hero, and ought never to have been so designated, but from a barbarous custom descended from the very persons who have tended to fix the blot upon us, which is now, I trust, for ever expunged from our escutcheon.

At the same time I wish it to be fully understood, that although my first duty is to execute the office entrusted (together with all the MSS., letters, genealogies, and other such appendages afforded to the biographers of great men,) by the representatives of a most distinguished and ancient family; and although I think it due to myself that the public should be aware that I am in no way dependent upon their frowns or smiles for the comforts and enjoyments of my attic elysium, I am not altogether of that unsociable class of beings who boast their own independence merely for the purpose of rendering others dependent upon them.

I beg leave, therefore, to assure my readers, male and female, gentle as well as simple, that full and ample satisfaction shall hereafter be given, touching all points which appear at present to be involved in obscurity; and that, if I forbear lifting the veil until we are somewhat further advanced, it is simply for the benefit of those whom it may concern; that is, of those who have bribed me to place the subject of this history in as interesting a point of view as the materials they have furnished me with will admit; and of those also who might, perhaps, be tempted to lose a fund of entertainment and instruction in the perusal, if something in prospective expectation were not held out to encourage their perseverance. I will endeavour to illustrate this by an anecdote.

A certain well-known person, a barrister by profession, and a wit by calling, during the western circuit having a leisure day, (a very rare circumstance with a young practitioner,) crossed the country to pay a visit to an old family connexion whom he had not seen for several years. The country cousin had retired from public life, after having taken a very active share, in voting at least, upon all party questions for six successive parliaments, during which he had sat as member for the county. The law-

yer found him in his study reading to his wife; and a more happy domestic scene of connubial congeniality of tastes and pursuits had rarely presented itself to his view.

After the salutations usual upon such occasions, but more warm and sincere than they are upon many, the visitor enquired of his host the subject of his studies. "Hume!" answered the retired politician, stoutly. "What!" returned the other, "growing sceptical, my good sir, in your old age?" "Sceptical!" returned the other; "God forgive you! No! we are reading his History." "Good," observed the barrister; "we are never too old to learn." "True! true!" replied the ex-member; "I never was more amused in my life." "Whereabouts are you?" asked the lawyer. "Just coming into the Revolution," answered, in a duetto, the gentleman and his spouse. "Well, then, you will trace all those important principles to their source," (the lawyer was growing eloquent,) "all those axioms upon which the stable foundation of the rights and liberties"—"Hush! hush!" exclaimed the agitated squire, starting upon his legs, and placing his hands on the barrister's mouth, "not a word more—not a syllable, my good friend! If you tell us what is coming, there is an end of all the interest!!"

Although I defy any facetious lawyer of them all to spoil your interest, my gentle readers, by anticipating a tittle of the history of Pen Owen through its many revolutions, yet, as the staff is now in your own hands, and if I digress much longer, you may be guilty of skipping, merely to show your independence, I will at once proceed to draw up the curtain on my third act.

At the close of the second, it will be recollected we left our hero in a state of some perplexity, increased by that sort of indecision which is generated in the human mind, when operated upon and influenced by two opposed and contending motives to action. His life, perhaps, depended upon his immediate flight from London—his life appeared to him to be not worth preserving out of London. A nice casuist or a lawyer might, after much sifting, and consulting, and referring, have proposed a middle term; but necessity, which, they say, has *no law*, but is known to be the mother of invention, arrived at the same point by a nearer road; and young Wettenhall, who perceived the urgency of an immediate decision, proposed the expedient of retreating to some obscure lodging in the skirts or neighbourhood of town.

"The skirts, if you please," cried Pen; "no further." To the skirts, therefore, they directed their hackney coachman, after having properly muffled their persons, so as to escape detection. They drove first to Islington; but Pen checked the driver,

and swore he would not be dragged to such a distance from London.

A compromise was again entered into with his companion, and a lodging in an obscure court between Islington and Clerkenwell at length found, which appeared to answer all the purposes for which it was chosen. It was situated in a paved court, to which there was access from two or three neighbouring streets; and the accommodation, if not such as suited with the notions of a Bond Street lounge, was at least sufficiently comfortable to be the asylum of even a dandy in danger.

Having arranged this point, and settled terms with the landlady, it was agreed that Pen should not rashly expose his person to observation—that he should take his necessary exercise when other folks generally return from theirs—and that he should change his hat with an invisible brim for one that should possess the merit of the original invention, to shade his face and eyes. He was to assume a silk handkerchief in place of his usual neck appendages, and wrap himself up in the folds and capes of a box greatcoat, which Wettenhall lent him for the purpose. To all these conditions Pen subscribed without a dissentient shrug; for, in truth, he was thinking of something else; and his aide-camp departed to gain intelligence from the enemy's camp, and to ascertain the state of the wounded.

It may appear strange that Wettenhall should openly risk his own safety, whilst he had so providently catered for that of his friend; as the seconds, upon these occasions, are regarded in pretty nearly the same light as the principals in the eye of the law; but Wettenhall was fully as well acquainted with Pen Owen as the reader; and I leave it to him to judge whether he did not decide wisely in leaving our hero in a fortified station, whilst he scoured the country.

Our hero was too much agitated and bewildered by all that had recently occurred, to think of leaving his retreat that evening: he pondered, he fretted, he raved, he wrote, he dozed, he read. His landlady, according to the terms prescribed, produced, at a certain hour, a greasy mutton steak, at which his stomach revolted; and he reverted to the savoury steams of his favourite coffee-room. There he met again Major Irwin—thence he was transferred to the major's house—again he heard the mysterious injunctions—then followed, in regular links, the whole concatenation of circumstances which brought Ellice Craig, and her unaccountable conduct, in array before him.

When his hostess appeared to carry off her untouched specimens of domestic cookery, he was in the act of transferring various moveables from their several appropriate positions in the apartment, with more haste than attention to their uses, and had

actually dashed upon the hearth a large vase, not of Grecian or Etruscan origin, but of painted glass, and valued by our landlady as much as if it had actually been produced from the excavations of Herculaneum or Pompeii.

She stared with horror at her lodger. He, recalled to his senses by the presence of a stranger, was equally shocked at being detected in a paroxysm, which, he at once felt, was not to be explained to a person of this description. He therefore affected to be mightily concerned for what had happened—chucked several times—(the reader understands me without the aid of Johnson) and, stooping to collect the fragments, seemed to be earnestly intent upon discovering some mode of remedying the injury.

The good woman had been invited up stairs by the clatter of chairs, tables, and other hitherto unapplied missiles shifting their quarters somewhat more abruptly than is usual, and particularly by an outrageous expression of wrath and indignation, which was straightway followed by the smash of her favourite ornament.

His assumed composure did not therefore impose upon her, as intended; and the mysterious circumstances under which a gentleman of his appearance had taken up his abode with her, led to suspicions which she had not time to follow up to any definite conclusion, although they halted only between the alternative of her having housed a madman, or one who was flying from the officers of justice for some high and flagrant delinquency which hung feverishly about his conscience. When, therefore, he expressed his regret at the accident which had happened, and requested, in his mildest tone, that another might be provided at his expense, she perceived the necessity of withholding, for the present, any expression of her suspicions, however she might hereafter be induced to act upon them.

Joining, therefore, in the regret so handsomely expressed, she only added her fear that “such a beauty was not likely to be found soon again for love nor money; but she would do her best to satisfy his honour.” She now carried off the dinner-tray, without observing the bad compliment paid to her culinary exertions, her eyes and attention having been fully occupied in alternately looking at the still-agitated countenance of her lodger, and the various articles of her *tidy* household, which lay scattered about the apartment.

Early the next morning, Wattenhall appeared, with a countenance that bespoke him the bearer of no very agreeable tidings. He told our hero that Lord Killcullane was given over by his medical attendants, and that the most fatal consequences might ensue to him, if he remained any longer in the country. Pen was

in despair, not—to his credit be it spoken—on account of the perilous situation in which he found himself placed, but from the deep remorse and contrition he felt in being the murderer of a fellow-being, whom he knew only to destroy. All the cold reasoning and calculations, arising out of his personal danger, were rejected with contempt—he rather would fly to the injured father, and resign himself into the hands of justice, as the price of pardon from the dying victim of his precipitation.

Wettenhall found it vain to contend with a man who held life to be a secondary consideration, and who never suffered his passions to capitulate to reason, when they had obtained full possession of the citadel. He, therefore, shifted the conversation, and, by degrees, found an opportunity of communicating his own intentions upon this trying occasion.

“I presume not, my good friend,” said he, addressing Pen, “to dictate to you the line of conduct necessary in this emergency : your own good sense will, I have no doubt, suggest what is most proper and expedient”——

“Most conducive to peace of mind!” interrupted Pen; “if any thing can conduce to it.”

“Be it so : you will judge of all this better than I can do ; but I am compelled to act for myself, and must take those precautions which”——

“Take any you please!” exclaimed our hero, “so that I am not included in them.”

“Nay, but, my good sir, listen to me. It is painful, grievous to me, to part from you ; and yet, as the heir of Sir Luke Oldysworth”——

“The heir!—what then?”

“It would not become me to submit to the indignity of being hurried to prison as a felon.”

“As a felon!”

“As the accomplice in a murder. Such the law of the land, in spite of the law of honour, holds our crime.”

“And so it ought, sir ; the law is a good law, and should be enforced. What right have I, or you, or any wretch, blinded by selfish notions of a spurious honour, to make widows and orphans at our pleasure?”

“Nay, sir, this is a hard lecture to me, who, you will recollect, was an unwilling witness of your”——

“True—true,” (shaking his companion’s hand,) “you had nothing to do with it : it was my own precipitation and folly, and that cursed Irishman. I’m to blame. Pardon, pardon a distracted wretch, who knows scarcely what he says or does, and has nothing in life worth the tenure”——

“Say not so, my good friend ; better days may come ; Lord

Killcullane may recover, in spite of the medical prognostics. Ellice Craig may be found; your friends be reconciled; and a short time dispel every cloud that seems to hang so heavily and gloomily around you."

"Why then should I fly? No, no! I will abide my fate."

"Do so; but still be prudent—keep entirely within doors—do not write to your friends at present. I shall endeavour to make my way to Bristol, where I will see and explain every thing respecting your conduct to them, before I embark for some foreign shore, which may be necessary until this storm has blown over."

"You mean to fly, then?"

"What would you have me do? I may at this moment have been traced to your lodgings. My own I have discharged, and deposited my portmanteau at a coach-office in the city as I came hither, thinking a public conveyance the least likely to attract notice."

"You could not have done better. Why should I involve you in my misfortunes? Go, my friend—deeply, deeply, do I regret having hurried you into this scrape. Still *you* are heart-whole; your conscience is not oppressed." Pen sighed deeply; and Wettenhall, seizing the opportunity of his mind being thus softened and subdued, re-urged the necessity of precaution. A plan was settled, by which it was hoped all discovery might be avoided, until the fate of Lord Killcullane should be decided. Pen, however, resolved to stand his trial, and only listened to the suggestions of prudence so far as to avoid the inconvenience he had before experienced, of imprisonment, at a moment when he considered his liberty necessary to gain tidings of Ellice Craig.

Our hero, whom the reader will not be disposed to tax with any extraordinary exertion of the noble talent of foresight or precaution, had parted with Frank Wettenhall, without ever once reverting to the state of his finances. They were now reduced to a very few shillings, which he had rattled in his breeches' pocket during the greater part of his late conversation. Wettenhall, who possessed somewhat more prudence and recollection, returned to ask him what he intended to do, in order to replenish his exhausted store. Pen answered, in a careless tone,—"I suppose I must write something." To this Wettenhall offered a few observations, respecting the necessity of ready money in his present obscurity, the time necessary for such an exercise of his mind, and the present perturbed state of the exchequer upon which he proposed to draw. He regretted that he had scarcely sufficient to carry him down to Bristol; but suddenly recollecting himself, he took leave of his companion,

by assuring him he would send a person to him who had more than once accommodated him with small loans, and would anticipate any security he might require for the supply of Pen's emergencies. Pen, with tears in his eyes, embraced his generous and provident friend; and having torn himself from him, threw himself into a chair, and gave vent to his feelings aloud; among which, none of the weakest seemed to arise out of the narrow suspicions he had been induced to harbour respecting the character and conduct of the only man who had thus stood forward his protector and benefactor in the hour of need.

Our hero had discharged his servant before he left Wettenhall's lodgings; and, according to the plan originally agreed upon, had assumed the name of Mr John Brown, which, it was conceived, might pass current without notice amongst the crowd of John Browns, who, no doubt, pursued their honest and dishonest vocations in the city and suburbs of the great metropolis.

In the course of the morning a person was ushered into our hero's apartment, who, stating that he came at the request of Mr Francis Wettenhall, was invited to take a seat; and Pen being wholly unacquainted with the forms of business, paused for the stranger to open the budget. After several preparatory hems, Mr Snell (for that proved to be the gentleman's name) presumed that Mr Brown had occasion for a loan.

"A trifle, sir," answered Pen.

"Hem!"

"Fifty pounds will be sufficient for the present."

"Fifty pounds, Mr Brown!"

"I am not"——

"Sir!"

"I beg your pardon. I am—go on, sir;" and Pen, having checked his predominant disposition to ingenuousness, assumed an air more fitted to the business in hand.

"Fifty pounds, Mr Brown," observed the money-lender, "is"——

"Is what, sir?"

"Is fifty pounds, Mr Brown—a large sum; and as times go"——

"Psha, sir! What is it to you? Your money will be paid shortly."

"So say all borrowers, Mr Brown."

"Mr —— Devil! 'Sblood, sir! do you think I would deceive you? Put down the money, sir, without more prosing."

"Put down the money! Mr Brown?"——

"Why Mr Brown, at every time, sir?"

"Why, Mr Brown"——

"Again! I tell you, sir, Mr"—

"Snell, at your service.

"If you are at my service, Mr Snell, deposit the money and leave me; for I am not in a humour to converse or discuss questions with you."

"Well, Mr Brown, I must own you are a most original borrower."

"Sir! I never borrowed before, and never mean to borrow again; so produce the money and decamp."

"Suppose, Mr Brown, I have not the money to lend."

"If I supposed that, sir, I should show you the shortest way into the street!"

"Sir!"

"Come, come, no words! You can have no possible business with me but as a money-lender, and cannot be a money-lender without money; so produce, sir, or leave the room."

"You are really so abrupt, Mr Brown"—

"I am really so determined, Mr Snell, that I will not be troubled with another word. Have you, or have you not the money?"

"I certainly have the money."

"Then deliver it."

"Deliver it, Mr Brown! I don't understand you."

"By Heavens, man, I'll wring it from you, if"—

"If! Why, you would not rob me?"

"Rob you, scoundrel! What do you take me for?"

"Take you for, Mr Brown! why the deuce take me if I know;" but perceiving our hero rising in his indignation, he lowered in his tone; and it is to be inferred, that having Wetenhall's security, he did not feel disposed to resent a conduct to which probably, in the usual routine of his business, he was not much accustomed. Producing, therefore, from his side-pocket a capacious leathern accompt-book, he drew out of it notes to the amount of the sum required, minus only five pounds, which, he observed to Pen, was the usual fee upon such occasions. Under the form of a fee, Pen's notions of injustice or suspicion of usury, if he had any upon the subject, were effectually suppressed, and filling up a note of hand prescribed by the money-lender, dashed off the signature of PENDARVES OWEN at the bottom, and threw it across the table.

"Sir!" exclaimed the astonished Mr Snell.

"What's further to be done, sir?" demanded Pen.

"Your signature, Mr Brown."

"You have it, sir. What would you more?"

"Pendarves Owen!" cried the man.

"Well, sir?"

"I must have your own signature, Mr Brown; I know nothing of *this* Pendarves Owen."

"*This* who, sirrah?"

"Why—this name you signed to the note. I know Mr Wetenhall, and I know Mr Brown; but who is Pendarves?"—

Our hero here interrupted his visiter; and I verily believe it was entirely owing to an accidental pause of reflection—very unusual when he was forming a resolution—that intervened, which saved the unfortunate Mr Snell from either being taken by the nose like St Dunstan, or kicked down the stairs like the complaining lover in the song.

He had entirely forgotten that he was Mr Brown, although so repeatedly, and to him so offensively, reminded of it by his companion; and any reflection upon the family name, we know, was not to be tolerated by the blood of the Cwm Owen Owens. Fortunately, however, that of Brown was repeated just as he was in the act of rising from his chair, for the purpose of maintaining his family dignity, and struck his ear and recollection in time to save himself from a very ridiculous piece of bravado, and the usurer from a practical joke, of which his simultaneous retreat from the table indicated his apprehensions.

Pen, therefore, dropping his extended arm, by a very ingenious manœuvre, contrived to make it just descend upon the note of hand, which, taking up, he affected to smile at his mistake, although all his indignation was transferred from his intended victim to himself, for having condescended, under any circumstances, to assume a false name. He disdained to add to the subterfuge by any further mummerly, but hastily erasing his real signature, wrote John Brown, without saying a word further to the staring money-lender, who appeared to be as well satisfied by his silent dismissal in a whole skin, as Pen was to find himself again alone, and unmolested by the matter-of-fact transactions of a mercenary world.

In a few minutes he had as utterly forgotten the money-lender as the money, which lay upon the table, where it had been deposited; and, pacing his chamber with quick and hurried steps, was soon lost in reveries, which, if it were not for the lowness of the comparison, we should liken unto the nature of a certain compound beverage, which I trust may escape the purifying hands of radical reform, when pruning patriots have settled other matters to their satisfaction in our good old town of Glasgow. It must, however, be confessed, if I am to speak as a connoisseur on this head, that the acid was infinitely too predominant over the sweet, to afford our hero all the advantages of the mixture. But if we again consider how powerful a sweetener a sanguine temperament of mind is to its possessor,

we shall not be surprised that, in about three hours after the departure of Mr Snell, Pen Owen found himself sufficiently composed to recollect that, as he had taken no dinner the preceding day, it would be an act of justice to all parties concerned, to secure himself against a similar disappointment on this.

Perhaps he might not have arrived at the latter conclusion so soon, by half an hour or more, had not his landlady, who now entered the room, brought the reflection of the kitchen fire on her face, and with it the reminiscence of her handy work on the previous day. This reduced him to the necessity of an immediate resolution. He very civilly—for he would not have wounded her feelings for the world—informed his hostess that he should not dine at home, and followed up the information with enquiries upon a subject which seemed to have a much stronger hold upon his mind.

He said he had some advertisements to send to the newspaper-offices in the neighbourhood of the Strand, and asked her whether there was any confidential person in the house who might be trusted with the commission. The good lady, who perceived the table strewn like a banker's counter, with notes of various denominations, was happy to turn her talents to any account, by which some of these might become lawfully her property; and therefore immediately suggested, that people must be paid for their time; that the Strand was at a great distance; and that if people were taken off their work—

"Enough, enough, good woman," cried Pen; "get me a trusty messenger, and the deuce take the expense"——

"Bless your honour!" exclaimed the landlady, dropping her best curtsy, and hurrying out of the room, lest she should betray her contemptuous joy, or joyful contempt, whichever the reader pleases, for a young scape-grace, who, with the obvious means of incurring it, cared not for the expense of gratifying his wishes.

It will be perceived, that the result of the late deliberation upon the mind of our unfortunate hero, was the renewal of his advertising plan; and as it was evident Ellice Craig had seen—because she had answered—his last communication, he sat down to word his appeal to her justice, and her plighted love, in as strong a manner as could possibly be adopted in a public correspondence by initials. When he was satisfied with the production, he rang his bell, and demanding of his landlady whether she had secured a proper person, she called down the stairs for "Phil, Phil."

Her summons was answered in the person of a young man, who entered the apartment taking off a leathern apron, and pulling down his shirt sleeves, and had evidently been called off

from mending or making shoes. With an intelligent countenance, he declared himself ready to go on any errand his honour might desire.

Pen immediately entered into the details of his commission, gave the man three separate notes for as many of the morning journals, bidding him pay what was demanded for prompt insertion, and to take a guinea for his trouble out of the five-pound note which he also put into his hand. The cobbler looked astounded, but quickly recovering himself, and aided by a significant turn of the landlady's eye, who called him "Nevey"—he made a very graceful scrape, which was intended to show his breeding—and "hoped his honour would consider the distance—and the sponsability."

"Have I not?" cried Pen, impatiently.

"Yes, to be sure, your honour; but you see your honour, I've taken off my work in the flush, as a body may say—and an old customer"——

"Well, well,"—cried Pen, "what would you have? Pay yourself—see that the thing is done, that's all; see that"——

"Oh, I'll see to all that, I've warrant," cried the almost grinning son of Crispin.

"Yes, yes," re-echoed the landlady. "I'll ensure he does all that."

Pen motioned them to depart; and had he been of a prying or a curious, or even like many persons as well born and bred as himself, of a more ordinary make of mind, such as is merely attentive to what is going forward round and about it, he might have overheard something like a giggle on the stairs, that could not be wholly suppressed; and the loud slam of a door below stairs, which, from the peculiar rush that accompanied it, and certain sounds that followed it, any indifferent person would have sworn, must have been the operation of persons who, unable longer to contain themselves, found it necessary to retire for the purpose of giving vent to some pent up feeling of the mind. Whether, on the present occasion, this arose from a too acute sense of grief, or too coarse a tendency to laughter, must be left to the imagination of the reader who witnessed the grave demeanour of Pen Owen in entrusting honest Crispin, my landlady's "Nevey," with his commission.

CHAPTER XXIX.

PEN, whose appetite by this time had begun seriously to remonstrate against any further delay, determined to set forth on a voyage of discovery; and well knowing that the city of London was as famous for its viands, if not for its distribution of them, as the city of Westminster, he doubted not he should easily find some coffee-house, where he might satisfy an appetite which had increased upon a two-days' fast. It was nearly dusk, but he recollected, for once, that in entering a public coffee-room, he should find light enough to be discovered, if any one should be upon the look-out for him. He, therefore, adopted the style of dress prepared for him by the prudent foresight of his friend Wettenhall.

He passed through several streets, without the least previous knowledge of them, and found himself at length in a large market-place, which, after a laugh at his ignorance from some self-sufficient cockney, he learned was Smithfield. This brought to his recollection the unfortunate Mrs Weston, who had attended him in Newgate, and whose affecting tale had repeatedly occurred to his mind, and as frequently induced the resolution of finding her out, and contributing, if possible, to the comfort of her afflicted daughter. But although our hero cannot be said to have had much business in town, it will be allowed by every one who has been admitted to his confidence, that his time had been fully occupied from the very hour of his arrival in it.

He examined his pocket-book for the precise direction to her lodgings; but finding that this consultation was likely to be increased by the arrival of several uninvited persons, who were gathering about him, he thrust the book into his pocket, and staring full in the face of these gentlemen, who were dressed somewhat in his own costume, he demanded "what they wanted with him!" They only smiled, and winking at each other—"hoped no offence." Pen, turning on his heel, was proceeding on his way, when one of the party, taking him familiarly by the arm, asked him, "if he had any objection to parting with the pocket-book he had just seen." Pen stared—but shook off the man, and thinking him only a sturdy beggar, told him he was an impudent scoundrel; and putting forth his hand to seize him by the collar, found himself ——— upon a bed, with red and white check curtains, in a small apartment, dimly lighted by a single candle, with two women busily employed in chafing his temples with brandy; and his respiration nearly stopped by large supplies of the same liquor poured down his throat!—

Even so, gentle reader : he had no recollection of what passed after putting forth his hand to seize the fellow whom he considered to have insulted him. He had been immediately felled to the ground by a ruffian behind ; and those who are better acquainted than he was with the dexterity of the London pick-pockets, will understand the despatch used in emptying the pockets of our unfortunate hero, and the little probability of their doing any thing to contribute towards his recovery.

This occurrence took place in the middle of this large market-place, among the pens, in which the cattle had been exposed in the morning, and but few passengers took that line of walk, after the traffic of the day was over. Pen must have remained on the spot some time, as appeared from the statement of the person who found him, and who, like the good Samaritan, being neither more nor less than a Lincolnshire grazier, had raised him from the ground, and with the assistance of some persons who had answered his summons from the more frequented walks, conveyed him to the first public-house whose doors stood open for the receipt of custom. Finding that the pockets of the stranger had been completely rifled, he being obliged to proceed on business, left a few shillings to ensure the attention of the people of the house, and promised to call again, on his return from his factor's.

Pen's first efforts were employed to resist the alternative, either of suffocation, or a state of inebriation, by refusing to swallow any more brandy, which already raged like a furnace within ; but which, no doubt, had contributed to quicken the pulses, and restore him to life and recollection. The latter came upon him only by degrees, and it was some time before he became acquainted with all the circumstances of which the reader is already possessed. He felt considerable pain in his head, but in the course of half an hour suffered little more from his misfortune than a sort of general numbness through his frame, which might, perhaps, be attributed as much to the remedy, as to the blow which he had received. He had been carefully examined under the inspection of the worthy grazier, whence it appeared, that no injury had been sustained in any other part of the body ; and that, probably, the first blow having been effectual to the purpose of the villains, he had escaped further mischief, which they would not have hesitated to inflict had it been necessary.

Our hero having risen from his bed, finding no occasion to remain any longer a prisoner, expressed a desire for something to eat ; for his appetite was among the first of his faculties that appeared to be perfectly restored. Whilst his meal was preparing, his deliverer, the grazier, arrived to enquire after him, and

expressed himself much pleased to find the object of his benevolence so far recovered from the effects of his misfortune. He then related to him the circumstances to which Pen probably owed his life, and for which our hero expressed his strong sense of obligation. "Thee might ha laid there tull morening, youth," said the good man, "an I hadn't a call across the market; for I'se pretty well a match for thicken sort of Lunnun gentry, who plies in thom bye places."

"Why, sir," cried Pen, "a man may traverse the deserts of Arabia as safely as the streets of London, if this be permitted."

"Laik enow! laik enow!—A ducnt knaw the ruod ye spaken on; but, if it's war nor this un, it's bad enow, o' all conscience."

By this time several other persons had taken their seats in the apartment, which was a sort of tap-room; and one, who appeared also from the country, and was sitting near the grazier, bore his testimony to the observation.

"Why, look ye, zirs," said he, "it's but a year come next Lammaz sin I were mysel' up in the field, with a feu score of wethers."

"Whoat breed?" asked the grazier, keenly interrupting him.

"Southdown like," replied the other; and so I goes me to old Ladbrook's, and makes my bargain—no higgling with old Ladbrook: he knows the valley and the markets zo."

"So!" taking him up, said the grazier, "thee made a bargain. I know the old fellow, and he's a sharp un at a push as ony on 'em."

"A fair dealer, sir," observed the other.

"Oy, oy!—All fair in the way of treade."

"If I thought otherwise," answered the farmer, with something of an air of pique, "I'd carry my pigs to another market."

"Pigs! quotha," said the grazier laughing.

"Yees, as the saying is; but"——

"Wull, wull, let aluone!" again interrupting the farmer, cried the grazier. "He maun rouse betimes that teakes me in!—a who wad catch old birds maun catch 'em at roost. It war another guess matter when a' was a youngster; but noo, a' defy 'em."

"Yees, yees, master!—ould birds—but, as ai was saying, I sould the wethers, zo"——

"What may 'em have faught?" asked the grazier.

"Ayte and thirty," answered the other.

"Nuoa greet sheakes, measter!"

"Ise content."

"Wull, wull! let aloane!—It's nuoa mun's busienys an thee's be satisfied. I gets fuorty at Spalding; but let aluone!" cried the grazier, with no little appearance of exultation, whispering

to Pen at the same time, "he's but a flat, I'm moinded—some west country tinkler."

"Yees," answered the farmer, who heard not his by remark. "Sic a man as Tom Crossthwaite, in your north country, ha' their waiy and their price too."

"Whoa! whoa!" exclaimed the grazier; "do'st thee know Tom Crossthwaite, as thee call'st un?"

"Knew un!—why, yeez, zurely, by character;—'twould be waundy queer an I didn't know the best feeder and the warmest"—

"Think ye! think ye, maister!—What's yere name, neighbour? I daun't remember thee gib."

"Why, thee ben't he?" cried the other, staring in his face.

"Ben't I! then I ben't! but this u'll soy, measter, what's thee name?"

"Noah Tup," answered the other.

"Whuoy then, Measter Toop, I think thee all as one for Tom Crossthwaite; for little as thee think'st it, thee be'st speaking to his own sel."

This the grazier said with no small degree of conscious pride.

"Indeed!—I ax yere pardon, Measter Crossthwaite—no offence, I hope! no offence!"

"Offence, mun, for geeing un a good word, thof thee didst not speer me. Neay, neay, an that be all, we'll wash it down in a sneaker of toddy. Here, mistress, let us ha a good half-crown's urther. It's odd enow," turning again to the farmer, "that we shadn't ha' met before, Maister Toop."

"Ize Gloucestershire, Measter Crossthwaite, and duont often travel moiself," answered Mr Tup. "Ize younger heels for off work: moreover, Measter Crossthwaite, I cannot abide the ways of this ere toon: it frits me, mun!—it frits me, ever sin my mishap."

"What mishap?" demanded the grazier.

"As I were telling ye," said Mr Tup, "it's two years come next Lammaz."

"Thee sold thy wethers?"

"Yees; but then comes the quandary, Maister Crossthwaite, to think I shuld ha' stumbled on the very mun I were speaking on."

"Ha! ha!—'twas queer enow."

"As I were saying, Measter Crossthwaite, I had touched the ready for ma wethers, and counted them into a bag."

"Weel, weel!"

"And wad ye believe it, Measter Crossthwaite, befuor I slept that night, the bag and shiners were all clearn gon!"

"Guon!—wheyre?"

"Yees, where indeed ! Stolen, Measter Crossthwaite."

"Whoy, how could'st be such a ninnnyhammer."

"Ninnnyhammer, Measter Crossthwaite ! I should liken to know how I was to prevent it. I commed as it were here, into a public-house, and I zit me down as it war, theere, where you are, Measter Crossthwaite, and theere zits a queer zort of a chap, as it may be where I am, and a begins a cock and a bull story about the Lord knows what, and draws all our wonderment at a parcel of lies, as they all turned out to be, and then he ploiys his antics and rigs, and pops his head under the table zo ! and then up zo ! and makes uz all laugh zo !"

"Like enow, like enow," cried the grazier, laughing at the representation.

"Yees ; but it was no laughing matter in the end, as you'll foind, Measter Crossthwaite, for a contrived some how or other, by his curzed vagaries, to whistle moy money bag out of moy pocket."

"Ay, ay, didn't I saiy, sir," turning to Pen, who was abstractedly discussing some eggs and bacon—"didn't I saiy that our friend Toop here was a ninnnyhammer to lose his money, and to be laughed out on't. Oh ! Measter Toop, Measter Toop ! I'se up to these rigs ; I'se an ould bird, not to be caught by such chaff, I'se warrant ye—ha, ha !"

"Measter Crossthwaite, Measter Crossthwaite, it's no laughing matter, I saiy agen ; for just as ye may be grinning there, so war I, when up gets my story-teller, as I do naw, and walks out of the room with an air, and cries out to us, 'Let them laugh as wins ;' " and so, Master Noah Tup repeated the scene to a tittle, in pure imitation of the original, even to the shutting the door after him !

"Ha, ha, ha !" roared the grazier, for Mr Tup appeared to be an excellent actor ; "ha, ha ! weel, weel, good now !—cuom in, cuom in—that ull do, Measter Toop, teak thee glass ; thee wast a ninnnyhammer still. Warn't he, my good young gentleman ?" appealing to his only auditor, Pen, who now filled a glass from the sparkling bowl. "Why, yes, sir," answered Pen, "it seems odd that a money-bag should be laughed out of a man's pocket, it must be confessed." "Cuom, cuom, Measter Toop," bawled the grazier in a louder tone of voice—"cuom—the joke's over ; you maun cuom in now !" The spirit, however, had vanished, and the incantations of the grazier appeared to be ineffectual to raise it again.

"That's waundy strange, arn't it, young gentleman ? Whuoy, what the dickens is the mun about ? Here, missis, d'ye know fairmer Toop ?"

"Anan, sir."

"D'ye know the fairmer as just left the ruom?"

"No, sir; never seed him in my born days before."

"Weel, weel, he'll be bock at his laisure; so here's to your amendment, young gentleman."

Pen thanked him as in duty bound, and then again expressed how deeply he felt the kindness and commiseration of the good grazier. He took down his address, for the purpose of remitting him the advances he had made, and declaring himself able to find his way home, was about to take his leave.

"Stuop a bit," cried the grazier, "I will see thee on thee way. I'll just woip off this score. Mistress, what's to pay?"

"Five and elevenpence farthing, sir."

"Weel, weel, ye know how to rin up a score as well as yere betters; but no matter;" so thrusting his hand into his breeches' pocket for his money-bag—Oh, reader—he found how inimicable an actor was that farmer Noah Tup. "Hey, whuot!" exclaimed the gaping grazier, "ma pocket turned insoide out! Holloa! Why I'm robbed—plundered—pickpocketed. Murder! There be foorty good poonds gone. Stop him, ye rascals! Woman, woman, I'll ruin your house!"

"I'm sure, say your vorst, no one ever dar'st to utter a vord against my ouse."

"Why, I've been robbed, plundered in it, woman!"

"Not in my ouse, I'll be sworn," cried the landlady.

"Why, look thee, old fule, an't my pockets clean picked?"

"That were not in my ouse, I'll stand it to any justice's face in the three kingums."

"Hell and fury, auld brute ye! wad ye talk me ut o' my seven senses?"

"Senses or no senses, never vas robbery committed in my ouse; and I'll take my davy of it, this blessed night before I sleep. Here, Peg, bring down that here Bible."

"What ha' I to do wi' your swearing and your davy, wuoman? it won't swear back my money-bag. I'm lost, undone!"

"Pray Heaven, not!" exclaimed Pen, who had not yet interfered. "Are you sure?"

"Sure! Whuoy I felt it in my pouch when I called the rascal a ninnyhammer, and rattled it in defiance. War there ever such a"—

"But, my good sir," cried Pen, "I trust and hope that the loss will not affect you so deeply?"

"Deeply, young man! What's thee think I mai pick up foorty poonds in the kennel, or that a grows in the fens?"

"No, sir; I only mean, however serious the loss—it is not, I hope—it is not ruin."

"Ruin, mun!" answered the grazier proudly, "Whuot dost

think foorty poonds will ruin Tom Crossthwaite, or twanty times foorty, or twanty to that? Nuoa, nuoa, it ain't that; but I cannot bear that lousy rapscaillon laughing in my face, and—but I'll not put up with it; I'll have 'em all before the justice."

"You may do as you please," cried mine hostess. "Here, Peg, go call your master from the club. You may just do as you please; but this I'll swear, and so shall Peg and Nobs, that never was a robbery committed in this here ouse!"

"Why, good woman," cried Pen, "how can you take upon you to say"—

"Take upon me—good woman indeed! No more a good woman than your mother, be she who she may. Take upon me"—

"The devil!" exclaimed our hero. "Will you dare to say this gentleman has not been robbed?"

"Yes I dare—and swear it too—not in my ouse!"

"Why, woman! is your house charmed?"

"None of your jibs upon my ouse, sir; paid scot and lot for twenty years, and it an't a whipper snapper like yourself shall gie it a bad name."

"A bad nuame!" cried the grazier; "I care not a rush for its nuame or its mistress; but robbed I hae been, and this gentleman ool swear it."

"Gentleman! pretty gentlemen both, forsooth! without a brass varthing between you. You're both in a story."

"Look ye, mistress," cried the enraged grazier, "law's to be had."

"Ay, thank my stars! Here, Peg, run to lawyer Ferret, in Knaves' Acre. Yes, yes, law's to be had, I warrant ye."

"Yes, woman, but not from Knaves' Acre. I'll ferret ye, I'se warrant."

In such recriminatory discourse—in which Pen occasionally bore a sufficient part to justify his being considered a stanch ally of his injured benefactor—was a considerable time lost, whilst the latter appeared to obtain no consolation for the loss he had sustained beyond that of venting his indignation in empty words.

A man, who had been listening to the conversation for some time, but who had taken no share in it, drew our worthy grazier and his coadjutor, Pen, aside, and advised them to press the matter no further, for that all the satisfaction they were likely to obtain from law would be expense and vexation; that the rascal who had imposed upon Crossthwaite was probably by this time so completely metamorphosed that he might be playing the fine gentleman at the west end of the town. "The people of the house," continued he, "are probably in league

with him; but it would require more knowledge of the machinery which works wheel within wheel in this city of corruption, than you are likely to obtain in the course of your enquiry." There appeared to be so much good sense, and at the same time so much candour in the counsel thus given, that Crossthwaite was soon brought to consider his loss as a lesson upon his self-confidence, and a caution against falling into a new trap.

Pen, however, as is the case with the most ingenuous persons who have suffered by an over-confidence in the professions of men, allowed a suspicion to enter his mind that this new ally might be some other rogue in disguise, suited for a new attack upon himself or his fellow-sufferer. He recollected, just in time to prevent an explosion, that this person must, in the course of the late discussions, have ascertained that the league was penniless, and that nothing could come of nothing. He dismissed his suspicions, therefore, and submitted to the judgment of a man who appeared in all respects better capable of estimating their true interests than the coalesced powers of Crossthwaite and Pen Owen, with all their philosophy and experience to boot.

The grazier, however, could not agree altogether to suppress the indignation he experienced, or to leave the house without bestowing some hearty and energetic threats upon mine hostess, Peg, and the husband, who had by this time arrived, assuring them that they should hear from his lawyer before they were four-and-twenty hours older.

The concert produced by this stirring symphony to the vocal powers of the domestic phalanx, was of a nature to astonish, if not to charm, by its novelty, the ears of our hero; but when the landlady, in the display of her powers, pushed her bony knuckles to the very tip of his nose, his passions, as usual, got the better of his discretion, and seizing the husband by the collar, who had urged her on to this bravado, he dexterously turned her worse half (supposing herself to be the better) over his right leg, and left him sprawling on the floor.

The stranger now covered the retreat of his new allies; and whilst the cry of murder! thieves! fire! issued from the den, they made their way into the street, Crossthwaite insisting that Pen and his new companion should accompany him to his own lodgings at the Blue Posts, where they might have a cool tankard together. The proposition was accepted by the several parties, and our friends were soon seated round a good fire, with other social accompaniments, which the landlord, who duly appreciated the rank and importance of the Lincolnshire grazier, had already prepared for his reception.

CHAPTER XXX.

A common topic is the *desideratum* of a company whom accidental circumstances have brought together; but the late occurrences, in which all had been more or less engaged, furnished one ready made to the hands of those assembled in the parlour at the Blue Posts. Crossthwaite, in spite of his boasted possessions, could not help looking upon his loss, as the poorest of his neighbours would have done, had his only ewe-lamb been taken from him by the spoiler.

"Weel, weel—say what ye wul, it's plaguy hard," observed he to his companions, "that a mun can't sit him down in a ruom without ha'ing his property whisked off; what be the use o' laws a shud loik to know, an thoiy sleep o this monner?"

"What, indeed," answered the stranger; "we may boast of our rights and our laws, but whatever they may have been, they're clean gone now-a-days."

"Anan!" cried the grazier.

"I say, sir," returned the stranger, "we're little better than slaves, whilst we bawl liberty, as if we knew by experience what it was."

"Surely, sir," observed Pen, "we ought, in the present case, to complain of the laxity, rather than the severity of our laws."

"It comes to the same thing," answered the stranger. "'Tis all the effect of corruption; when the head is rotten the members can't hold together."

"Is not that a *Petitio Principii*, sir,"——

"A whuot?" asked Crossthwaite.

"I ask this gentleman," continued Pen, "whether he is not begging the question; for certainly, members may be deranged without either the head or the system being corrupt. For instance, what law could anticipate the depredation made upon our friend's pocket? or how is the neglect of the magistrate to be inferred from an evil, which the vigilance of those most interested, could not on the spot, anticipate or prevent?"

"If the laws were not corrupt," retorted the other, "such breaches of them would not be tolerated."

"Rather," replied Pen, "if they were so corrupt as you say, these would not be breaches of them."

"If they were not corrupt—they would prevent them."

"Nay, sir," answered Pen, "the law can only punish; prevention of crime is to be looked for only from the inculcation of sound morals!"

"And how is this likely to be the case, when every institu-

tion in society is contaminated by prejudice, and rotten at the core?"

"I don't understand this," cried Pen.

"Why, what is your parliament, your courts of justice, your"——

"Whuoy, thee'st nothing to say agen parliament, mun?"

"Against it! what is there to be said for it?" demanded the stranger.

"For it! I duon't know what's to be said for it," replied the grazier; "but this I know, it's the constitution."

"What——in its present form?"

"Whuoy, what the deuce other form would'st ha', mun. A' never seed it mysel, so caunt pretend to talk about its form; but"——

"Really, sir," said Pen, "I cannot infer your meaning. Is not parliament just what it always was—or, if any alteration has taken place, is it not all—on the popular side?"

"The deuce it is!" cried the stranger; what, the corruption, the boroughmongering system, the"——

"I know nothing of these cant terms of party; I say that, in what are called the *proudest periods of our history*, corruption stalked in open day, and members of parliament received bribes as openly as lawyers now do their fees."

"What's that to the question; though I don't believe a word on't."

"Sir," exclaimed Pen, "I speak from authority."

"Suppose you do, sir; our eyes are now opened; we see the corruption, and we must crush it."

"You see what doesn't exist, sir," retorted Pen; "no such degrading traffic is carried on in the present—*corrupt times*."

"Whoi, ater all, gentlemen," cried the grazier, "what the dickens has parliament to do wi moi pocket being picked by that confounded rascal Noah Toop, as he called himself?"

"Every thing! if there is no foundation, the whole building will totter," answered the stranger.

"But, sir," observed Pen, "you have not proved the fact yet."

"Proved! isn't it as light as day? What need of proof? Are not seats bought and sold, and trafficked like bales of goods?"

"A man may buy a seat in parliament," returned Pen, "without carrying rottenness to the constitution.—I have been told that almost all our greatest patriots and most distinguished statesmen have bought their seats."

"What of that, they're your sham patriots, your lack-a-dalsical Whigs, who denounce a minister, and walk arm in arm with the honourable gentleman the next moment."

"Why, sir," exclaimed Pen, "it is to such men we owe the existence of our liberties. I don't speak of trading politicians on one side or the other, either in the higher or lower ranks; but of men who are interested in the preservation of our rights, and who do not think it necessary to become the tools of faction, or the preachers of sedition, in order to check the excesses of a minister or the peculations of a public servant."

"They may all be shaken in a bag together," returned the stranger; "Whigs and Tories, ins and outs, and the devil not be much puzzled when he puts his hand in."

"And yet, sir," resumed Pen, "it is to the conflicting interests of party, that we owe the blessings of our constitution."

"Pretty blessings! and Heaven thank these corruption-breeders for them."

"What has all on a sudden corrupted these men?" asked Pen; "men who from their property—station, and connexions, are at least as much interested—as the sturdiest reformer can be in the common weal?"

"Bribery, corruption, and boroughmongering!"

"But, sir! you will admit, that open boroughs and counties are often bribed into a return of members."

"That may be; we can't help that."

"Will that mend the matter?—how is a man who has bought and corrupted whole masses of people, to carry a load of virtue into parliament; whilst he who simply pays the same money for the purchase of a seat, without either corruption or bribery, is loaded with execration and accused of mercenary motives?"

"Because it is against the constitution!"

"Where is the constitution, sir?" asked Pen.

"Where!—the Lord knows where; any where but where it ought to be."

"The Lord deliver me from such a rigmarole," cried the grazier; "the constitution any where!—odds, mun, thee doasn't mean to sai ould England ha'n't a constitution?—What's all to do at Westminster there?"

"I only wished the gentleman," observed Pen, with a smile of contempt peculiarly his own, "to point out the constitution, which appears so defined to him, and to show how the practice of the same constitution in the best times differs from that of our own."

"Why, zounds," exclaimed the stranger, "you don't mean to defend corruption!"

"Far from it, sir," answered Pen; "I only want to ascertain it."

"And isn't it before your eyes?"

"If so, I am too blind to perceive it."

"None so blind as those who will not see."

"I only ask you to open my eyes."

"Hav'n't I told you, seats are bought and sold among the boroughmongers?"

"I answer again, this is no proof of corruption, or at least no proof of corruption peculiar to our times; for I repeat, it existed in what the reformers of the present day call the great and glorious times of the constitution. But I will go further, and confess that I think a man infinitely more independent, in the fullest sense of the term, who enters the House of Commons as the purchaser of a seat, than one who, to secure his own interests with them, has been playing the courtier and sycophant, and must continue to do so, to please and pamper the prejudices and passions of his constituents. Such a man is a slave to one small faction of the nation, and shackled in his efforts to benefit the whole. If he is sincere in the proffers he makes, (alas! how seldom,) and in the gross flatteries he bestows upon them, he is fitter for a courtier, than the legislator of an extensive empire; if he is acting the hypocrite with them to gain a seat, he is capable of any baseness to turn that seat to his own profit. The man who pays his money for what you gentlemen call a rotten borough, may be a rogue; but, at least, he has not proved himself one by previous practice. He may, like the other, hypocritically profess patriotism, to further his own selfish ends; but he has not previously cajoled and cheated his electors, as an earnest of his talent at manœuvring."

"And you call this man a representative?"

"I do, sir, in the strictest sense of the word. A member of the British Parliament is not a DELEGATE. When a man once passes the threshold of the Commons House of England, he represents the Commons at large, and not a particular county or district. He may, from circumstances, have local interests to guard, but even a turnpike bill, or an enclosure, interesting alone to his constituents, can but command his solitary vote. It is the country, the majority of the representatives of the whole empire, that must decide its adoption or rejection. If it were otherwise, a member of Parliament would resemble a satrap or governor of a district, and his constituents would become eventually little better than the slaves of the soil. Each would be absorbed in the petty interests and cabals of his particular charge: and being responsible to his constituents, rather than to his countrymen at large, his public conduct without a check, and his private intrigues beyond the reach of investigation, a power unknown to the institutions of a free state, would be engendered and fostered in every corner of the empire. County would be found jobbing against county, borough against borough;

and the practised politician might by turns bribe and sell his constituents, with whose local interests he would thus so identify himself as at length to render a separation on their part—impolitic—if not impracticable.”

“This is all wild—all abroad, sir.”

“Wild ! is it so wild, as to suppose that you can check corruption, by extending the means to corrupt ; or that by opening the doors to sharpers and adventurers, you can cleanse and purify a legislature, composed (no matter how) of all the prominent talent, and professional wisdom of the country ; of the most distinguished representatives of the landed, the commercial, and trading interests ; and altogether of those who bear the stamp and character of men of honour so legibly, that the least flaw in their title is discernible, pointing them out to public scorn, and barring their access to the higher honours of the state.”

“Still they are not elected by the people.”

“Not by the people at large, admitted ; but were they ever so elected, or was it ever proposed they should be”——

“By the constitution they ought to be.”

“Show me any authority, prescriptive or practical, and I will admit the fact, however disposed to deny its expediency.”

“At least, it is generally so believed ; and at all events, you will not deny that the right of voting has been shamefully infringed upon.”

“I do deny it, sir ; and upon authority you cannot dispute. When the elective franchise was limited to forty shilling freeholds, the GREAT BODY OF THE PEOPLE were excluded from the right altogether ; for forty shillings, at that period, were at least equal to as many pounds of our present money, and the change has operated to extend the franchise to thousands, who, without this nominal change in the value of money, would by the constitution, have had no vote at all.”

“I know nothing about that,” returned the stranger, in rather a subdued tone ; “I am only interested in what concerns the present day ; and thousands who have the right of voting, are excluded by the tricks and knavery of those who have power to keep us down.”

“I have shown, I think,” continued Pen, “that they have no right ; for natural right, as you reformers call every wild demand for a participation of power, cannot be abstractly considered or applied to a state existing under fixed laws and established compact. But this is from the point ; I would limit myself to present evils, which you affirm to exist, and the existence of which, until you produce proofs stronger than mere assertion, I must still deny. What have you to say,

not theoretically, but practically, against the description of men, (subject, I admit, to human infirmities, and not without exceptions,) who at this present moment constitute the legislative body?"

"Including in their number the whole host of borough-mongers?"

"I see no ground of exclusion!—Why, sir," cried Pen, raising his voice, as was his father's practice, when he supposed an assertion might be mistaken for a paradox; "why, sir, I have no hesitation in saying, that the objects, abstractly considered, for which parliaments are constituted, would be fully accomplished, if the electors of Northumberland were to choose representatives for London, or those of Westminster to return members for Cornwall. All local interests, by the spirit of the English constitution, which is, after all, the depository and the aggregate of the good sense and sound experience of successive generations, are to merge, and must be made to merge, in the general interest of the whole; as each individual in society must necessarily sacrifice a portion of his independence to secure the liberty of all."

"Cuom, cuom, now," interrupted the grazier, "that wud be a strange soit, howsomever; a caunt consent to that by no manner o' means, I maun chuse my oune parliament man, cuom what wull"——

"I don't know where the deuce the gentleman is running," cried the stranger.

"I run at nothing, sir," answered Pen; "I have asserted, and do assert again, that the mere mode of election is a matter of comparative indifference. I say comparative, so long as the property of the country is duly represented; so long as the representatives of that property, in some shape or another, are sent to parliament. As to the qualities and principles of men, they will differ as much, after your projected reforms as before, and will so continue to do, until human nature itself be reformed. Common safety is the real bond of political union; and those who possess property, individually, will be most anxious to preserve property, upon the whole."

"Why is property," demanded his opponent, "why is property to be the only thing represented?"

"Simply because property is the first thing to be secured upon a permanent basis; for without this, liberty can be nothing but licentiousness."

"And so the rich are everlastingly to grind the poor!"

"How that follows, I am at a loss to conceive," replied Pen, who began to grow warm in his subject, "unless you conclude government under every form to be a tyranny."

"Pretty near the mark," retorted the stranger.

"Then we need argue no further, sir," cried Pen, starting upon his legs; "if you understand the force of your inference, you are the advocate of pure anarchy; and none but a madman would reason from such premises."

"I mean!—I mean no such thing, sir; it is you that are the madman, I think."

"Sir!" exclaimed Pen.

"I mean no offence, sir; but when you talk of the electors of Westminster electing members for Cornwall, and at a sweep get rid of the glorious franchise of"—

"Psha, sir! you confound hypothesis with argument. I never meant to recommend such a measure, but to illustrate my opinion that even such a mode of election would be more consonant with the first principles of the constitution, than your bewildering chimera of universal suffrage."

"Right is right, sir; every man has a right to vote for representatives in parliament."

"Pray, sir, may I ask where you find this right?"

"In the constitution."

"In the clouds! Show me, sir, something more tangible—show it me in the practice of the constitution."

"It needs no showing; it is among the first rights of man."

"So is eating his brother—if he be strong enough to slaughter him; if not, he must submit to be eaten himself. And so, in the only instance of these rights being literally reduced to practice in later times—universal suffrage appears to have been the harbinger of universal slaughter—where the constituents and their free-chosen representatives were alternately victims and butchers."

"Waunds!" exclaimed Crossthwaite, "a never heer'd o' such thing; wheere mought this have happened, hey?"

"The gentleman is talking of the old story of the French Revolution," replied the stranger, turning contemptuously towards the grazier.

"Oiy, oiy!—bad fellows them ere Frenchmen, sure enow."

"Old or new," retorted Pen, "it is truth written in characters of blood, which none but those who thirst for blood can regard other than as a beacon to warn their countrymen from running headlong into the same devouring whirlpool."

"This," replied the other, "is always the way with your party; when argument fails, you fly to"—

"My arguments fail, sir!" (a sore point with Pen) "my — But no matter; facts are better than the strongest arguments, and experience a far better guide than opinion."

"Why should the same excesses follow from a reform in this country?"

"Because the same causes will generally produce the same effects; because, in the present moment, the cause is advocated upon the same principles—appeals to the same dangerous passions of man—and opens the same means of gratifying them; because, erroneous as was the principle upon which those men acted, many good, honest, and patriotic individuals were sincere in their adoption of them. Whereas there is not one—no, sir, not one—among the present leaders of popular delusion, who does not anticipate general havoc and destruction, which the others never contemplated—who does not look to revolution when he cries REFORM. They only hoped to effect reform—when they found themselves plunged in REVOLUTION."

"It isn't fair, sir, to stigmatize, in this sweeping manner, thousands of your countrymen."

"I would say the same if they were my brothers, and merited it as truly," answered Pen coolly.

"You forget, sir, that some of the leading men in the country—some of your own favoured aristocracy—your nobles, and your honourables, and your right honourables—come in for their share of your censure."

"And they are most heartily welcome to it!"

"Do you suppose they look forward to such scenes as you describe—that they are disposed to resign their titles, and their ribbons, and their lands—for the sake of a scramble?"

"I should think them one degree less guilty if I did."

"Then you do not believe them to be sincere?"

"No, sir!—if I thought so, there would be a drawback on the score of pity; and they could not be chargeable with hypocrisy."

"The Reformers are not to be deceived by false friends?"

"I never suspected them of being fools," replied Pen with a peculiar emphasis.

"Then you must allow the others to be knaves?"

"It is not my business," answered our hero, "to class the parties.—I trust my country, in the long run, will do that effectually."

"The short of the matter then is, sir," said the stranger, "you would have no reform at all."

"I object to reform no where, sir," replied Pen, "when it is necessary; but I must be convinced of its necessity by better arguments than I have heard to-night, before I give my voice to so hazardous an experiment."

"Necessity!—why, haven't you yourself admitted the fact,

that seats in parliament are bought and sold ; and what have you urged in defence of it ?—moonshine—an opinion ”——

“ Moonshine—my opinion, sir ! Are you aware ”——

“ No offence, no offence intended ; but opinions are but opinions, and as you yourself observed just now, cannot weigh against facts.”

“ Facts—true ; but you must call your facts by their right names.”

“ They are still facts, call them as we will ;—but let that pass.—I only ask you, sir—why a few great overgrown landholders are to monopolize all power, and grind down the great mass of the people, as if they were mere slaves of the soil ? ”

“ I should rather ask you to prove your fact, before I can be called upon to account for it.”

“ Who are our law-makers, but those imperious lords who combine to rivet our chains ? ”

“ They may be law-makers, without either imposing chains or riveting them—but, perhaps, by this pretty figure of speech you design to represent the laws altogether ”——

“ The laws in *these* lands I certainly do ”——

“ Then, sir, we understand each other. You would prove that anarchy is preferable to any regular form of government—and it necessarily follows that laws are but types of slavery.”

“ Give me leave to say, sir, you do not understand me, at least ; no man has a greater reverence for the laws, or is more firmly attached to the constitution, than myself.”

“ Only—that, like the man who had grown so attached to his knife, that he bestowed a new blade and then a new handle to it—you would renew it altogether.”

“ No, sir, I say what I think, and what I feel ;—I am not bound to uphold the faults and defects, though I may love the constitution as sincerely as you do.”

“ Depend upon it, sir, our love begins to slacken ominously—when the faults of the object are more visible to our perception than its beauties—one step more, and our love is turned to hate.”

“ Ay—well—I don’t understand all these roundabout ways ; I stick to my facts, and want only a plain answer to a plain question ; why, because men have monopolized our land, should they have the power to monopolize our rights ? ”

“ Still, your question in this form is any thing but a question : for you beg the whole of it, and then demand a categorical answer. But since you are determined to have one, I answer, in the first place, that those who have the greatest stake are likely to be most interested in the welfare of the country, whilst at the same time I readily admit, that this predominance

should be so extended, as to prevent partial or unjust leaning toward any particular class or order of men, in society."

"There you have hit it; isn't that what I say?" asked his opponent triumphally.

"I fear not exactly," answered Pen; "for, by referring to the very grievance—the canker which the nice optics of the reformers have discovered in the system of close boroughs—we shall find that the practice of the constitution, in deviating from the strict theory, has applied the most effective means of preventing any undue preponderance of the landed interest over those of the monied, the commercial, or trading part of the community. I will not discuss with you, sir, the first principles of government. I have already said—what no man acquainted with the subject has ever denied—that the representatives of a country whose object is permanency and security, must be the representatives of its property. This is the principle of English legislation. When this was originally established in our constitution—which, by the bye, you, sir, seem to imagine a piece of old parchment, drawn up by some notable lawyer, and declared regularly signed and sealed by somebody, at some particular date"—

"I said no such thing," interrupted the stranger.

"Your arguments imply it, at least; but, when this principle was first understood and acted upon, land was the chief, if not almost the only representative of property; so that even the boroughs were frequently omitted in the returns to Parliament, through the agency of their superior lords."

"Wasn't that an insufferable grievance, sir?"

"It might be so, sir, in your opinion; but we are speaking of the *pure* periods of the constitution, to which your reformers look back with such tender yearnings, when, instead of a grievance, it was considered as a relief from a burden. I must not, however, be interrupted, sir. Land, I repeat, was *then* the representative of the property of the country; but, as the rights of individuals came to be better ascertained—when the professions were opened to men of every rank and station in life—when the spirit of adventure brought the treasures of a new world to our shores, and commerce and trade multiplied the sources of wealth—a strict adherence to the letter of the constitution would have excluded the whole or greater part of this new property (inasmuch as it was extraneous and independent upon the land) from being represented in parliament, and have subjected a large and daily increasing portion of the people to the overruling and predominant influence of the landed interest. Without, therefore, imputing injustice to the landed interest, we may suppose their ignorance of the true nature of mercantile or

commercial transactions, to be a sufficient ground for some change in the original plan of representation. There was no opening, no provision made for this new state of things. It was not because certain towns, rising into importance, and certain ports appropriate to commerce, might occasionally send men capable of watching their interests, that the great mass of persons unrepresented at all would be satisfied. These, as I said before, might assert local rights and privileges; but it was necessary, with a view to the country at large, and to the privileges of the constitution, that some essential change should be made in the general representation. Our ancestors were too wise to propose sweeping reforms. The constitution had been gradually forming itself under the collective wisdom of succeeding generations; and any sudden deviation from its course was only likely to produce those rude convulsions which have more than once threatened the subversion of all that has rendered us the wonder and admiration of surrounding nations."

"Bravo! bravo!" exclaimed the grazier, who had been roused from a gentle slumber by the increasing energy of our hero. "Auld England's worth 'em all shaken together."

"The machine," continued Pen, who hardly heard his *cheerer*, "was so well put together, that it gradually adjusted itself to the new order of things. As ancient boroughs decayed, or became rotten, if the term please you better, they fell under the influence of small bodies, and even individuals, who by degrees secured a right in them, between which and the exercise of it, no law could interpose; and this right, by purchase or conveyance, was made over to individuals of every class or order in the community, who could afford to avail themselves of it by the profits of professions, commerce, or any other branch of honourable industry and exertion. It might be affirmed, indeed, that this innovation was essentially democratical; and it might, without difficulty, be proved, by reference to facts, that these rotten boroughs have constantly afforded an opening to the admission of men who have most strenuously advocated the cause of the people, and who could by *no other means* have found their way into Parliament."

"What of that?" demanded the stranger. "Have not the people, in the same proportion, been dispossessed of their rights? have they not forfeited their franchises?"

"Surely not, in the instances to which I allude. The rights you speak of must have disappeared with the population."

"Then, pray let me ask what you have to say upon close boroughs?—*they* have not lost their population."

"They have lost no rights, at least. They remain as they were originally constituted."

“ And is it fit or proper that a few corrupt men, called a corporation, should usurp the power which belongs only to the people ? ”

“ I know of no rights which are not acknowledged by the constitution. Every corporation is an elective body, generally elected, for their character and respectability, by their fellow-citizens ; and I see no reason why a certain number of men of character are, because they became incorporated, necessarily corrupt. You seem to forget that, in your favourite example of French liberty, with a *carte blanche* before them, and reams of constitutions in their pigeon-holes, elections were, and continued to be, conducted throughout the country upon a principle very analogous with that you are so disposed to decry as a mere trick of corruption. There the electors are removed, stage after stage, to a far remoter distance from their representatives in the legislature ; and you or I, in exercising our rights in the primary assemblies, should know no more of the actual candidate than of the man in the moon.”

“ All I can say, then, is, that it is a very imperfect mode of election.”

“ And yet it is the final result of a *philosophical* reformation ; which, meeting with no opposition either from tyrants above, or the people below—was at liberty to establish an Utopia—had they pleased.”

“ We have nothing to do with French reformers.”

“ You had better at least take a warning, rather than an example from them.”

“ All I mean to say,” said the stranger, who appeared to have exhausted his stock in hand—“ all I mean to say is, that it is hard the people of England should be deprived of their undoubted rights. God knows, I want no bloodshed or plunder ; but if parliament won’t do us justice—we are entitled to take our own affairs into our own hands ”

“ The plea of necessity is, unquestionably, a strong one ; but until you hear the case made out to your perfect satisfaction, it might be wiser to leave your affairs—where they are. Depend upon it, it would not mend the matter to have a horde of mob-orators—adventurers without principle—moral or religious ; poor, desperate, and needy masters—either of your liberties or your exchequers. Let me put one question to you, which I would rather you should answer to yourself, upon your pillow to-night : What reasonable ground have you to suppose, that six hundred men, of honourable life and character—I repeat *generally*, for exceptions must ever present themselves—of birth, rank, and education—men, who in their private conduct are unimpeachable, should, by being assembled together in a body,

become at once rogues, plunderers, and tyrants? Or, by what possible process can you arrive at this conclusion, on the other side, that an equal number of men chosen by the most ignorant and unenquiring classes of the people, under the influence of leaders who are known to be of desperate fortune—and of most abandoned character in every private relation of life—are by incorporation, to become at once pure—incorrupt—and incorruptible stewards of a people's rights and property?"

"A reform at least," returned his opponent, "will prevent its being worth any man's while to be dishonest."

"Why, to be sure," said Pen, smiling, "Mr Noah Tup could not possibly have proved himself a thief to-night—if our friend here had not possessed a bag of gold for him to steal;—but this is, after all, but a negative sort of security, which is at present as effectually afforded—by the dread of punishment."

"Common interest, and common sense, would be the guide of a people—truly free."

"Common sense, and common interest," replied Pen, "may be fully sufficient to conceive a beneficial plan of self-preservation; but it requires something more to originate one for their common purposes."

"Every man," retorted the other, "knows what liberty is."

"Not one in ten thousand!" exclaimed Pen.

"Cuom, cuom," interrupted the grazier, "that maun be a bounce at ony reat, saving your presence, moy friend; the deuce is in't an every ass duont know that."

"But the ass can't tell you what it is—and remains still an ass," replied Pen laughing.

"And a beast of burden," snarled the reformer, "or he wouldn't continue such an ass."

"If you are speaking of your friends, sir," continued Pen, still laughing, "you have clapped the saddle on their backs—not I."

"Faith, sir, it may be sport to you; but 'tis death to us."

"That is, as things may happen to turn up," cried Pen, still enjoying his joke—which may be equally perceptible to the reader; but after a short time, finding his opponent silent, he addressed him in a more calm and friendly manner, and from his appearance and circumstances which occurred during the foregoing discussion, conceiving him to be a misguided, rather than an unprincipled person, he asked him whether he had never heard his associates in reform, confess that their object was, in effect, "to do away with the regal government?"

"We never professed any such views," was the reply.

"And yet, sir, it is clear as the sun at noon-day, that a House of Commons reformed according to your plan could not

subsist under a monarchy; in plainer terms—that a regal government could not co-exist with a legislature so formed, for a single year. It would be no longer a house of representatives; but a chamber of delegates, who, claiming to govern in the name of the sovereign people, would feel—and quickly avow the inconsistency, of submitting their decrees to the ordeal either of Lords or King. They would at least discover, as the old rump of Oliver Cromwell, and their more modern copyists, the French regicides did—that both a king and a house of peers only stood in their way, and that they could just as well do without them.—With their subsequent necessity of recurring for security to the old standard, and of restoring the same things, under the different names of emperors—or protectors—of conservative senates, and councils of state—we have nothing at present to do.”

“And so—you would have us submit”——

“Stop, sir,” cried Pen fiercely, “I can reason with a REFORMER; but I must repel a REBEL: you either fight under false colours, or you must disprove the result I have anticipated, to be consistent with your scheme.”

“Why, thee ben’t one of them radicals—ater all, mun, bee’st thee?” asked the grazier.

“That’s the way with you all,” cried the baffled reformer; “you can call names.”

“Not I,” answered Pen, with great calmness; “I did not say you *were* a rebel—I only meant to show, that what is called radical reform, must inevitably lead to the subversion of the constitution, for which it professes to entertain so jealous an affection—that those who are capable of reasoning upon the subject, cannot fail to perceive it;—and that those who are not, are only blind instruments in the hands of those who do. The charge of corruption is brought against our existing institutions and public functionaries, without any evidence beyond that, which goes to prove—what no man in his senses ever doubted—that no human work is, or ever can be perfect, or perfectly exercised. A change is proposed under the general and undefined term of reform, which actually undermines, and provides for the destruction of, all that is virtually good with what may be supposed capable of improvement, and has rendered the country for centuries the envy and admiration of Europe; whilst it carries with it not a shadow, or pretence of remedying a single evil it professes to have discovered. The popular branch of the constitution has for many years been gaining ground upon the other two estates; and I have no hesitation in affirming that the power of the crown is more circumscribed and limited in the present, than in any former period of our history. The few

crafty politicians, who are the secret springs and movers of the radical party, perceive this—and cry out against the House of Commons, as the usurpers of power—whilst they affect to identify the interests of the people with those of the crown, at the very time, *in fact*, when they are labouring to seize upon that popular branch of the legislature, as the most effective and powerful means of becoming masters of the government, and turning it equally against the people and the two other estates of the realm. All parties, my good sir," continued Pen—whose brain having been set in commotion by the hostile appeal recently made to the outside of his head—or by the sapping system of the spirituous remedies within it—had become unusually eloquent—"all parties are constructed upon the same principles; it matters not whether it is limited to the weekly club at mine host's in the village, or extended over the country, in affiliated societies, from a parent-stock in the metropolis. A few strong and determined heads, who perceive all their points and concentrate all their means of aggression, gain the ascendant; a larger number of agents receive from them their cue, and dole out in daily portions, through the medium of a hireling and prostituted press, or in clubs, associations, and public meetings—poisoned food for discontent and disaffection towards the government. The evils incident to all men, but more pressing upon the subordinate classes—as must inevitably and necessarily be the case in every community—are made to appear the result of peculiar and extraordinary corruption on the part of their governors: every privation is felt, which had never been felt before, and the common lot of man is rendered intolerable to them, by the conviction that it is the immediate product of tyranny and oppression. There is but one step from feeling an injury to the attempt at redressing it. A patriot, or mob-orator is at hand with the means, and the misguided multitude rush forward to aid his patriotic exertions, without stopping to enquire, or without sufficient intelligence to ascertain, the nature or extent of his designs. The people of this country, who wept tears of blood as a martyred sovereign was led to slaughter—had been blind instruments in the hands of his murderers, and invested them with power sufficient to crush their monarch, and themselves.—The people are again called forth, and encouraged by the promises of men, who have not even the pretext which gave an air of patriotism to the rebellious Roundheads; and whilst they thoughtlessly accumulate the materials for their own future subjugation, would be incapable of informing a bystander whether they were about 'to fire another Troy,' or to see a man creep into a quart bottle."

"Whaw!" exclaimed the grazier startled from his slumber

by the vehemence of Pen's oratory; "then these radicals be bottle conjurers, ater all, be they?"

"Something like it," answered Pen laughing.

"Well, sir," cried the reformer, starting from his seat, "it is not worth my while to refute you; you are self-willed—bigotted to the system; but—yes, sir—I should like to hear you, where you would meet with your match—I wish I had you"——

"Where, sir?" demanded Pen.

"Where I am going this moment," answered the stranger significantly.

"I fear to go no where, sir!" retorted Pen, with an air of confidence.

"You'll not betray us!" said the reformer mysteriously.

"Do you suspect me, sir?" demanded Pen.

"I think not; but there is danger."

"None that I shall shrink from, sir!" cried our true hero.

"I am going—to a select meeting."

"Of whom?" asked Pen.

"Of men who are embarked in the glorious cause; and who, in five minutes, will convince you of your errors, sir!"

"I am open to conviction," answered Pen.

"And will be moderate!"

"I always am so."

"Humph!—well, sir; take this ticket."

"Ticket! why, it's a hieroglyphic!"

"It will gain you admission without enquiry. Come, sir, if you have courage: we have not far to go."

"Courage! doubt it not, sir."

"Whoir be ye gawing?" asked the grazier; "it's toim for Bedfordshire, I think."

"I think it is," replied the reformer, looking at his watch; "it is time for us to be off, at least. Good night, Mr Cross-thwaite; I trust you may meet with no more of Mr Noah Tup's family, before you return to Lincolnshire."

"Thank ye naighbour, thank ye; thof my moind misgives me, ye be about some roguery of your awn."

"We are only going—to meeting, sir," answered Pen smiling.

"Joy go with ye! I loik no such works, oim all for mother-church."

"And King!" added the reformer with a sneer.

"Yees, sir! and what's more, will foit for un; *agen* all's enemies abroad and at huom," retorted the grazier, with more warmth and decision than he had before evinced. "I doint loik your carrying off yon youngster to your meeting-houses and the loik—he"——

"Fear not," answered Pen: "my principles are pretty well fixed and settled upon those points. Our friend here (pointing to the stranger) is not likely to make a convert of me."

"There's no soying, there's no soying, young mun! seeing as how, he as handles thorns moi prick un's fingers."

"You're 'an old bird,' you know," cried Pen.

"Whew! whew!" grinned the grazier; and the parties shook hands; our hero and his radical friend, leaving honest Crossthwaite to doze over his loss, and quitting the room together.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OUR hero and his companion proceeded with hasty steps, through several blind alleys and cross courts, till they arrived at the door of a house, which stood apart from any thoroughfare, and appeared to be uninhabited. The stranger rapped upon it three times, which was answered by "a hem" from within; and the countersign being exchanged, it was opened. No person appeared, and the door itself seemed to close, by some sort of spring or machinery, the moment Pen and his companion had entered.

From a sort of pigeon-hole, such as are sometimes seen at a country playhouse for the receiver of admissions, issued the only light which rendered the "darkness visible;" and a hand (without any other part of the body being seen) presented itself, for the hieroglyphical card of admission, which was returned, after it had apparently been examined.

They proceeded onward, and passing several passages, dimly lighted by an occasional candle, reached, at length, a room of considerable size—of very antique form, and in a state of considerable dilapidation. At the upper end appeared a chair, evidently intended for the president of the assembly, and a long table immediately in front, on which were placed four large candles. Just over the candles were suspended an equal number of extinguishers, which, it was evident, might be simultaneously employed to produce immediate darkness.

About twenty men—whose figures could be but imperfectly discerned through the gloom—were divided about the room in small groups; whilst benches were provided on either side of the table, for a much larger number of persons. Our hero was resolved to be a silent spectator of all that was going forward,

although his imagination was busy in its review of the mysterious preparations for the coming scene.

The assembly seemed gradually to be enlarged, although by imperceptible means ; for so confined was the light, thrown by the candles on the table, that figures appeared to emerge from darkness into life, as they approached its limited precincts.

At length, something like activity was apparent among the members ; and soon after, several persons came forward with much form and gravity, and occupied the principal seats immediately round the table. A presiding spirit was seated in the chair. Our hero observed, that there seemed to be infinitely more precision in the mode of proceeding among the members, of what he now concluded to be the embryo of a reformed parliament, than in that which it recalled to his recollection. The recollection, however, was well-timed, as it was followed by a renewal of his resolution not to risk the consequences of such another act of imprudence, as he had upon that occasion been guilty of. He suspected—from some of the countenances which were now more obvious to his criticism—that a breach of privilege in *this* house, would be attended with a more prompt and rigorous penalty, than that which he had formerly experienced.

The president was a little dark-looking man, with a scant crop of jet black hair upon his head. His nose, attenuated to a point, was surmounted by an enormous pair of green spectacles, the tint of which communicated to the natural sallowness of his complexion, a cadaverous appearance, that made one look about him for the ceremonies of the grave, as more suited to the *tout ensemble* of his physiognomy, than the great-coat in which his person was enveloped. Near him stood several men, whose countenances spoke a strong, but vulgar energy of mind, varied according to the different features of each. Their dress and appearance indicated what is expressively termed the shabby genteel ; whilst, as the eye descended to the more numerous class of persons, now ranged on the benches near the table, it decided at once upon their rank in life—as artificers and artisans—whose faces displayed a variety of passions and sensations, not so easily classed as those, who evidently were considered, and treated as chiefs and leaders in the assembly.

Our hero was very much disposed, at one moment, in spite of his previous resolution, to laugh at the mock heroic scene, which was opening itself to his view ; but his companion, who kept his eye, and even hand upon him, and had placed Pen, as well as himself, out of the range of the partial rays of light—seemed to anticipate the effect, by earnestly pressing his arm, and whispering him—for Heaven's sake to be quiet.

A sort of muster-roll was now called over, and a severe scru-

tiny observed with respect to the alleged excuses of absentees. After this ceremony was duly performed, especial messengers were ordered to examine the entrances, (for there appeared to be several, though not obvious to a common observer,) and to set the guard!

The chairman then, in a solemn voice, demanded "if there were any unsworn members present." Pen's friend again pressed his arm to insure his silence; and the negative being apparently given unanimously, no further impediment presented itself to opening the business of the sitting.

The president began by a general invective against false brethren, and the necessity of arming themselves against the apostasy of certain men—whom he described, but named not—who had suffered themselves to be alienated from the brethren, by their doubts, apprehensions, or what they chose to call conscience. "Countrymen," he went on to say, "these are not times for the indulgence of womanish fears. We are embarked in a cause in which Brutus triumphed, and Hampden and Sidney bled. But why do I occupy your time? You are aware—let me again," interrupting himself, "demand, in the name of this assembly of truly free men, is there any uninitiated, any unsworn brother among us." A pause ensued, during which Pen felt assured that his arm had incurred several black and blue mementos of his conductor's apprehensions.

He was, however, silent; and the president was about to resume the thread of his address, when one of the assembly suggested, that if there was any doubt upon the subject, it might be advisable to propose the oath to all present.

Pen felt that neither his friend's remonstrances, nor his own apprehensions, should influence him to conform to the proposition; and he prepared himself, accordingly, for what might follow. Luckily for him, however, it was overruled by a buzzing sort of acclamation among the eager expectants of the disclosures evidently looked for in the speech of the chairman. He proceeded—"Countrymen and brother patriots! with you it is altogether unnecessary to urge motives. Those who are sworn to die in the cause, rather than forsake it, must have long ago made up their minds upon the necessity of the case. Every man of you stands pledged in this our solemn and last court of appeal! It has been over and over again proved, that beyond these walls, sacred to liberty, we are SLAVES—and we will be SLAVES NO LONGER!"

The latter clause was repeated in one burst by the whole assembly, *sotto voce*. "And," continued he, raising his voice, and with increasing energy, "those who are content to remain slaves, and hug their chains, shall be SLAVES to their LIBERA-

TORS, and not to the hirelings and bloodsuckers of a corrupt—worm-eaten—rotten thing—upheld by prejudice, and nicknamed a constitution!!”

“Hear, hear, hear!” ran through the assembly, though scarcely above a whisper. The orator rising with his subject, exclaimed—“The right hand of justice, my united friends and patriots, is unmuffled—the sword of state, which had rusted in her keeping, falls from it—and shall be replaced by the weapon of avenging liberty!!”

Here he drew forth a dagger from beneath his coat, and exalted it in his hand. Enthusiasm spread through the dark ranks, and with more than catholic devotion, did the grim-visaged conclave bend before the elevated emblem of assassination.

“The reign of prejudice is past,” continued the orator—“priests and their mummeries have had their day—and are set in darkness. The terrors of conscience are shadows that disperse before the energies of regenerated man; and we are no longer to be deterred by childish bugbears—invented for our subjugation—from taking the balance into our own hands, and sweeping CORRUPTION from the face of the earth!”—(Groans of admiration.)

“Here are the lists of the proscribed, ye regenerated men, (pointing to a volume on the table.) It is a new red-book, and a RED-book they shall find it in the day of retribution!—when he who feels compunction—or remorse—in sending home the vengeance of an insulted—trampled—and outraged people—to the hearts of their tyrants—is unworthy himself to live. Let him die the death!”

“Let him die!” was re-echoed in hollow murmurs.

“There are none here,” cried the speaker—“none who will shrink in the day of trial.”

“None,” was the awful response.

“The day is at hand,” continued he exultingly—“the day is dawning upon the fate of THOUSANDS who now sleep secure over the mine that is about to burst and hurl them to destruction! But, my friends”—and here the orator seemed to collect himself, and to subdue his feelings to the grave importance of his subject—“but, my friends, caution and policy must be our guides to light the train—we must try our force before we apply it. Our agents are at work in the remotest corners of the country—superstition is fast undermining among the most bigoted—and the enthusiasts of religion are the first to pursue their enthusiasm into the temple of truth—into *our* sacred temple!—THEY HATE ESTABLISHMENTS!—WE foment the hate—and after a purification—to which our disciples know well how to submit them—their preachers are as incapable of re-convert-

ing them, as the dumb dogs of the established mummerly themselves! The heaven is working, my friends—ay, and working rapidly; it has leavened the mass in the north, and the harvest is ripe; but we must make sure before we put our sickles in,” (raising again his poniard;) “the names of your leaders must be kept free from suspicion; we may *openly* preach LIBERTY and REFORM, and the bloodsuckers cannot reach us, while juries hear us recommend peaceable and orderly conduct; but when the glorious day arrives—when Britain rises to new glory—and a new birth—when the reptiles—the vermin—the high and the highest, are swept away—sifted—fanned—purged—annihilated—and the vapours of their blood exhaled, *then*, then, my champions of liberty, shall the SUN OF GLORY arise unclouded, and shine upon the path which superstition—bigotry—and despotism—have so long obscured from our view.”

The assembly was agitated, like a sea broken up by the sweep of a coming storm—it rolled deep—dark—and ominous—through which, like a watery sun, the ghastly smile of restrained triumph beamed cold, and almost livid, on the quivering cheek of PATRIOTISM!

It is not to be supposed that our hero sat very patiently under the trial of temper and principle—to which he stood pledged. More than once, he had actually raised his voice in indignant reply, to the cool atrocity of the speaker; but it was lost in the more powerful tones of triumphant approbation; and the imploring looks and signs of his companion restrained him from any immediate repetition of his temerity. The fact is, that this person was in reality not one of the initiated, and, owing to circumstances—not worthy a place in so grave a history—had not been submitted to the masonic trial of his fidelity, which those who were thought worthy of the secret council, were compelled to undergo.

He was a man, whose hopes in life had been overshadowed by misfortune, and a government prosecution, for some misdeemeanour in the way of business, had soured his mind, and embittered his future prospects; he had become a sectarian from no better motive, than a dislike to every thing which owed its protection to government. The conversation of artful and designing men, who knew what foundation they had to build upon—easily convinced him, that, as he admitted, religion being supported by the state, was of course only a state fiction, so—the laws being bottomed on the same principle, were merely upholden for the purposes of venality and corruption. He became a bankrupt and a patriot at the same moment; he entered zealously, or rather desperately, into the schemes of the reformers, and, adopting their language, so far imbibed their

principles as to wish for the overthrow of existing things—which, in the magic lantern of his political showmen, appeared to consist of a loathsome mass of putridity and disease, which it was absolutely necessary to purge off, for the safety of the body politic;—but Joel Bent—for that was his name—had not forgotten that he was a man—and was by accident—less an infidel than a sceptic. He was, in short, one of a multitude—a man of stronger passions than intellect—and, having stepped out of the right path, had neither resolution nor knowledge sufficient to retrace it by himself;—no one was at hand to help him, and he had gone on instinctively from bad to worse. His zeal, which was only temper—was excited and kept alive by the reformers, and his qualifications were considered sufficient for the rank of adept in the revolutionary STAR-CHAMBER. The failure of an appointment alone, had postponed the awful ceremony of his initiation, from which he certainly would have shrunk, when he found—it was a LEAGUE OF BLOOD.

The secrets of the prison-house—breathed now as it were in the very sanctuary of mysticism—occasioned, therefore, nearly as formidable a tumult in his own breast, as in that of our hero himself; and, knowing the consequences of detection, he very naturally trembled under the apprehension of any indiscretion on the part of his companion. He had brought him with him for the sole purpose of having his arguments—which had somewhat staggered his conviction—properly confuted by those master spirits who were employed in the various sittings throughout the metropolis, to keep up the necessary degree of irritation among the multitude of their instruments. To the few only were entrusted, the means—never very scrupulously examined in the tumult of insurrection—by which the great and final blow was to be struck.

He had endeavoured to convey, by a few significant hints, to our hero, the real state of things; but his fears, and even Pen's sense of the hazard he ran by a rash exposure of his principles in such a place, and at such a moment, were scarcely sufficient to restrain the impetuosity of the latter. When the ebullition of his contempt and indignation rose to the tip of a tongue—so unused to discipline, and so little subject to restraint—he audibly groaned in spirit, more than once during the president's oration.

Several members now delivered their sentiments, and suggested expedients. A patriotic turncock undertook to cut off all supplies of water, and a beetle-browed lamplighter—who had lost a contract by the introduction of gas-lights into his district—pledged himself to ensure darkness at any given moment of time. A zealous knight of the shoulder-knot, who

had suffered some indignities from a placeman—who had reflected upon his honesty, in refusing to give him a character—laid open certain ministerial expedients—gleaned from cabinet dinners by his brethren—and gave some very interesting details communicated to a political society, of which he was a member, by those who were well acquainted with the secrets of their masters, and were ready to impeach them when Astræa should again revisit the earth.*

The president listened to the suggestions of all with an affectation of urbanity, which, as it spread itself over his rigid features, seemed so out of place, that it might have been mistaken for a spasm—rather than the index of his mind. He rallied only those who spoke of moderation—of which, however, it must be confessed—no very prominent instances occurred, to break in upon the general sentiment. The nearest approach to such a sentiment betrayed itself, in the doubts expressed by a cashiered exciseman (who having been a placeman, was rather jealously eyed by some of his colleagues), when he proposed a pledge from their leaders—visible and invisible—that they would not usurp and abuse the power, when they got it into their own hands. Even the philosophy of the president was not proof against an insinuation—so groundless—and so unfitting a patriot leader—who was ready to lay down his life for the people!

The marked contempt of the meeting having been as loudly expressed as the solemnity of its proceedings would permit, the president was satisfied with the novel and appalling intimation, that “suspicion ever haunts the guilty mind.” The poor exciseman had nearly lost his grade, when, with that promptitude which is ever the accompaniment of an intrepid spirit, he rose from his seat, and with a vehemence too earnest to be mistaken, and too voluble to be interrupted, swore that he was ready *to prove his innocence*, and at that very moment, to blot out the bare insinuation, by plunging this (a clasp knife which he pulled from his pocket) in the heart of that arch traitor Lord ——.†

A general murmur of approbation arose, and although the achievement would have been “a consummation most devoutly to be wished,” it was negatived by a large majority of voices, who thought it premature. “No,” exclaimed the president, “citizen

* It is scarcely worth mentioning ; but the fact is, that this portion of our history, including the detail in the scene which follows, was written some time previous to the capture of Thistlewood and his gang of conspirators. The compiler of these important memoirs trusts that he may be believed when he adds—that he never possessed the advantage of his hero having been initiated in these “sacred mysteries,” and that, consequently, he cannot be suspected of having turned king’s evidence.

† !!!

Keg has proved himself to be a MAN, and worthy to be among the first and foremost of PHILANTHROPISTS. Oh, my friends, (with a spasmodic affection, intended for the pathetic,) how the feelings of our regenerated nature shrink from the sufferings of an oppressed people! How appalling to our *finest sensibilities*, the infliction of tyranny, torture, and gagging bills, to suppress and keep down the genuine spirit of liberty, and fraternal love!! Oh, my fellow patriots, sharpen the edge of your zeal, by looking on those bloodthirsty relentless villains, who usurp our rights, and trample on the finer feelings which *some* great first cause has implanted in heroic bosoms! Why are we, whose pulses throb with the native spirit of freedom, even to the bursting our very heart-strings—why are we pent up, as it were, within these walls, and whispering our grievances when we should be redressing them? Citizens, countrymen, patriots, Britons—arm—arm—here is a breast of steel to confront hosts of hireling butchers! the glow of patriotic ardour burns within me, and bids me face danger with a heroism and self-possession which TYRANTS and BIGOTS can never feel! Oh, that the miscreant tribe had a single neck, that at a blow we might cut off THE HEAD OF CORRUPTION!" "Hear, hear," resounded through the assembly, roused to enthusiasm.

"Oh, my brave comrades, that we had our enemies within our grasp—that we had them *here—here*, man to man—reform and virtue grappling with the blood-sucking tyrants—the sons of liberty, strong in the energy of their feelings, brave, resolute, irresistible, with the cowardly, base, grovelling creatures of despotism!"—"Hear, hear," broke forth in loud acclamations. "HEAR," cried a single voice in the succeeding pause—"Seize them, seize them; secure the outer doors," were cries that burst upon the astonished ears of the magnanimous president, and the body of gallant patriots! Doors were heard, yielding to the impetuous rush, and the glare of approaching lights shone freely through the enlarging crevices of the principal entrance to "Cato's little senate."

The orator thus indecorously interrupted, sunk back upon his seat, and seemed in the act of fainting; the coward fear of guilt was painted on the countenances of those, who had been most urgent in the pursuit of glory, and still more would have presented itself to the perplexed observation of our hero, had not the lights within the room been almost immediately extinguished. The conspirators seemed to have no inclination to face even the small force of hirelings and blood-suckers, likely to be brought against them, each seeking safety for himself, pushed down or trampled his companions under foot, in order to reach the private doors, by which they had gained admission. In the meanwhile,

the principal barrier had given way to the impetuosity of the assailants, and an armed party of patrol and peace-officers actively pursued the flying squadrons.

Pen had resolved, at once, to surrender himself, and to give information respecting all that he had witnessed; but having time for recollection, as he had been fortunately placed in a dark corner of the large room, and the invading party had already advanced beyond the spot where he stood with his trembling companion, he felt that he might do his duty without incurring the hazard and inconvenience of being dragged in the first instance, before a public tribunal, as a delinquent. Availing himself therefore of the obscurity, he ran towards a large window, which was at some height from the spot where he stood, and finding it yield to his efforts, opened it, and sprung up to it. It was too dark for him to discover the depth below—he paused within the opening, therefore, prepared either to take the leap, if necessary, or to retire by some other pass, should any present itself to his view.

In the meanwhile, he perceived that several of the reforming members were in safe custody; and as he saw some of the officers turning round, as if to conduct their prisoners back in the direction of his quarters, he raised himself on his legs to prepare for the leap, or to drop himself on the outside; his purpose was precipitated by the sudden cry from several voices in the same instant, of “Look to the window, look to the window; at your peril let Brown escape,” “Brown, Brown,” was re-echoed from the crowd, and a shot passed over Pen’s head, just as he made a desperate spring, which landed him safe upon the roof of a house, the tiles of which rattled down in a shower, to a depth below.

Figures appeared to flit about the window above, and the cry of “Brown, Brown,” accompanied by several more shots, discharged, luckily for our hero and our history, in an opposite direction, assailed his ears. He felt the horror of his situation, and would rather have faced, than flown from the danger, had there been any practical means of explanation at hand. As it was, he was compelled to lie *perdue*, convinced that the very sound of his voice would be the signal of death. As he lay stunned by his fall, and apprehensive of the consequences, if he should move from his position, he began, as usual, too late, to execrate his folly in having thus shared the full penalty of guilt, which he had never incurred.

But his reflections were of no long duration, for they were almost immediately interrupted by a female voice within the room, whose casement our hero’s head, to a certain extent, had fractured and displaced, and at the same time occupied the space it had forced. His legs were elevated above his body on the

inclined plane of an opposite roof; his body lay across a gutter, and his shoulders and head were partly within the frame of the broken casement. "Merciful heaven!" exclaimed the person within, "what is all this firing and shouting?" "It's the club at Mason's," answered another woman; "I thought it would come to this, with their night meetings, and cabals, and plots."

"I am sure," said the first voice, "I heard a smash among some of these garret windows."

"It's a monstrous shame," replied the other, "to fire into honest folks' houses, when they might be in their beds and asleep, just thinking of nothing at all; and"——

"Oh, heart!" cried the first voice, almost fainting; "if here isn't a bloody head thrown into the window!"

"A what?"

"Help! help!" screamed the other, running down stairs.

"Help! help, indeed!" cried poor Pen, in an under tone; whose unfortunate head, which was always leading him into scrapes, he endeavoured to turn, in order to secure the sympathy of the persons within; "for Heaven's sake, my good friends, make no noise, bring no light; but help me in at the window."

"What are you?—who are you?" exclaimed the woman; "what d'ye do there?"

"Hush, hush! you will betray me. I am an honest man, you need have no fears; if you give the alarm I am lost."

Pen now having looked up to the window through which he had escaped, perceived that it was no longer in possession of his pursuers. He, therefore, took courage to rise from his prostrate position; and having acquainted the woman with sufficient particulars of the predicament in which he stood, to induce her to admit him, she good-naturedly offered him shelter.

His eyes, at this moment, were attracted by a sudden burst of light from below, occasioned by the officers having found access to a back court, upon which the window opened; and he quickly perceived, that had he been on the spot where those gentlemen were now looking for him, they would probably have scarcely found him worth their finding; for it was at a depth which would have effectually secured any radical in the three kingdoms from again interrupting the peace of society, and, of course, from giving any further trouble to the officers of peace.

Pen shuddered when he reflected upon the narrow escape he had made; and now, for the first time, recollected the several flights of stairs by which he had ascended into the Pandæmonium of reform. He felt that, had he attempted it in daylight, he must have missed his footing; and nothing but the violence of the spring, which the cry, denouncing him by his assumed name, had driven him, without reflection, to make, could have

cleared the gulf which lay between the two buildings. Had he dropped, as a man of more caution and circumspection than himself would have done, this must inevitably have been the last page of our labours. As it was, he leapt, "as was his wont," in the dark; and, for once, he beat the plodders hollow.

The woman, whose fright had carried her down stairs, luckily found no one at hand to succour her in clearing up the mystery of the bloody head, which, as she saw none of its other appendages, she concluded had parted company with its body. Hearing, however, the pacific tone of conversation passing above, her native humanity, which fear only had suspended, led her to re-join her friend, and afford any assistance which might be required. She had her foot upon the stair, in order to re-ascend, when a fellow-lodger from the floor beneath (for she was tenant only of the second floor and garret) came running up, and, with terror painted in her countenance, gave notice that the officers of justice were searching every house in the court, in pursuit of a prisoner who had made his escape, declaring, that they knew he was concealed somewhere hereabouts.

She had scarcely concluded, when a violent knocking was heard at the house door, and away ran the informant to await the examination of her premises. The other as quickly mounted the garret-stairs, satisfied at once of the nature of the vision she had seen. She arrived just as Pen had persuaded her companion to suffer him to pass through the house; but the information which was quickly conveyed to our hero rendered a prompt change of measures expedient. They were still in the dark, save when a flitting moonlight occasionally threw a ray across the chamber. What was to be done? Pen's head had received several cuts in his fall, and one bled pretty freely, so that the handkerchief which was bound round it, in consequence of his previous accident, was very bloody, and gave him altogether a very formidable, as well as a suspicious appearance. They now distinctly heard the officers below stairs, and were in momentary expectation of their appearance in the higher regions; but at this instant, a new bustle seemed to arise, and a cry, "To the other house!—the other house!" was followed by the clatter of feet down stairs, and the shutting of the street door.

The good woman who had brought the first intelligence again descended; and quickly returning, desired our hero to follow her without hesitation or noise. Conveying him into a back room on the floor below, she informed him that the woman who lodged under her had, she knew not why, misled the runners, by assuring them that such a man as they described had forced his way through the garret-window, and meeting her on the stairs, had prayed her to save his life, by letting him out at the

street-door—that she, hardly knowing what she did, had not been proof against his entreaties; but that, before she closed the door, she perceived the officers entering the court, (which was a *cul de sac*,) and that the man in despair had rushed into the opposite house, the door of which stood open.

Pen was perfectly satisfied this could not be true; at least the first part of the story; but he had neither time nor materials for sifting the matter further; for he was scarcely lodged in the apartment of his protectress, before they heard a man rush up the garret-stairs, and in a moment after, the glass casement dashed with violence on the floor. The cause was soon explained—the lodger who had given notice of the approach of the officers, was secreting a husband who had rendered himself obnoxious to the laws; and the expedient, by which she hoped to gain time for his safety, succeeded at the very moment when she gave him up for lost. He made his escape by the very window through which Pen had entered, and, being well acquainted with the *transpantile* country, set his pursuers at defiance.

The consequences were easily anticipated. The return of the officers, and a more minute search, would inevitably follow the detection of the imposition; and all retreat was cut off from our unfortunate hero, who might as well surrender himself at once, as venture again upon the *terra incognita* which had brought him into such jeopardy just before.

Women are ever more apt at expedients than the wisest of those who call themselves their lords and masters; and Pen's hostess immediately suggested his jumping into a bed which stood ready prepared, and near which, a light from a half open door now discovered to him, he was standing. She took his great-coat and the bloody handkerchief from his head, together with his cravat; and throwing over his neck a woman's shawl, placed one of her daughters' caps upon his head, and covered him up with the bedclothes.

The cravat, handkerchief, and coat, she carried up stairs, and left the latter on the leads, outside of the window, whilst she dropt the others in the chamber, just within it. Thus prepared, she gave Pen his cue; and desired him to recollect he was her sick daughter, Nancy; and on no account to open his lips. As an instance of prompt obedience, he opened them with an exclamation, occasioned by the light flashing more strongly upon the good woman's countenance, as she opened the door of the adjoining room.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed he: "am I again indebted to the care and kindness of Mrs Weston?"

"Hush! hush!" cried Mrs Weston—for Pen was perfect in his recognition; "speak lower—who in the name of wonder are you?"

"Who! who but Pen"—

"Who!" exclaimed the woman, forgetting her own precaution.

"Why, Brown—plague take the name—he—to whom you were so kind in Newgate!"

"Humph!" ejaculated her companion, who had silently witnessed the scene; and began now to fear she was really implicated with some notorious offender.

"Is it possible!" cried Mrs Weston. "What! my good, kind sir—again involved!"

"On my soul, I am innocent—now at least," answered Pen: who was proceeding, with his wonted candour of communication, when loud noises, and confusion arising from the lower apartments, convinced them the party was returning.

The friends separated, in order to take up their several positions, as had been hastily agreed upon.—Pen lay snug—and it is a question with him, even to this hour, whether his mind was more occupied with the terrific or the ludicrous, in the mixed scene he was now performing. He was, at all events, however, more struck by the curious coincidence of falling, as it were, from the clouds, under the protection of the only being, perhaps, in the boundless metropolis, who would have felt an interest in doing him a kind office—than by all the difficulties his inconsiderate adoption of a plan—proposed by one who had appeared to be an utter stranger to him—was likely to involve him.

He heard the officers enter the adjoining room—and whilst his kind hostess was endeavouring to divert their attention, he was near enough to observe, that they omitted to search neither closet, press, nor corner, likely to afford a hiding-place to the person of whom they were in search.

Pen felt *rather* uncomfortable, however, when the officers desired her to open the door of the room in which he lay.—In vain she remonstrated against the indelicacy of intruding into the chamber of her sick daughter. They persisted—and our hero saw two or three grim-visaged gentlemen, who followed each other into the apartment—observing "that sick-chambers were not the most uncommon depositories of such patients as they came to attend;"—which joke was followed by a laugh, in which Pen certainly felt no disposition at the precise moment to join.

"Come, young lady—if such ye be, don't ye be faint-hearted—we've no quarrel with the fair sex—ye're sure now, you've no sweetheart under the bed—hey?"—and down knelt the party to ascertain the point—when poor Mrs Weston, dreading that their respect for the fair sex might not screen her *protégé* from too minute an inspection, gave the preconcerted signal to her

female companion, who—rushing into the room, screamed out—that an ill-looking man in a great-coat, and a bloody handkerchief round his head, had just rushed past her on the stairs, and was making his escape—she was sure, out of the back garret-window !”

“That’s he—by the Lord Harry!” cried the leader of the searching party.—It’s Jack Brown to a T.—Off, my lads—mount, and cock your pistols—he’s game—he has killed his man already,”—and up flew the gang after their leader.

Mrs Weston stared at Pen, who had acknowledged the name of Brown, and she had not heard his real one, in her former attendance upon him ; but Pen was not in a situation either to notice her astonishment, or to relieve her from it if he had, for he himself was equally struck with the annunciation of the peace-officer, that he was in pursuit of a person of the name of Brown, who had killed his man. This again brought to his recollection the detection of his person in the seditious meeting, and the consequent pursuit, from which he had so far escaped.

He could no longer doubt that he was indeed a murderer ; and that Lord Killcullane’s relations were vindictively pursuing him. The horror of his crime smote upon him, and he shuddered, as he recurred to the precipitancy with which he had been hurried on to the commission of it.—“Oh, my God !” he cried in agony —“I am indeed guilty of man’s blood !”

“Horrible, horrible !” exclaimed the almost fainting Mrs Weston, whilst the woman who had been her companion during the preceding scenes, groaned out, “We are undone, neighbour Weston, if we harbour a murderer ;—the law ’ll make we his ’complices.—Lord a mercy on us ! I know sure, what I say.” Here the searching party were heard descending the garret stairs, swearing at their disappointment ; but giving and receiving orders for the renewal of the pursuit.

“We must give him up,” said the woman.

“Never, never !” exclaimed Mrs Weston. “If I die, I will save him.”—The woman was about to reply, but the good hostess rushing between her and the door, stood on the threshold as if to receive the officers, and began talking in a loud tone of voice, in order to drown the purpose of her companion. “Well, gentlemen, kind gentlemen, have you found the ruffian ? is he on the house-top ?—is he ?”——

“No d—— him,” cried the man, “he has gi’en us the slip ; but we have agot his skin,” holding up Pen’s great-coat and handkerchief, “and shall soon fit him, I’ll be bound. Off, Nab, to Ball’s Court—and you, Bullface, to the back lane. The scent lies warm ; we shall catch him in his lair. Off, I say ;”—and

without re-entering the apartment, the party rushed down stairs, and left the house, without giving any further trouble to our hero.

Mrs Weston threw herself into a chair, and covered her eyes with her hands. "Who would have thought it—who would have thought it! Oh, sir, I considered you a pattern of goodness, and spoke of you to my poor Rose as an angel."

A soft, but melancholy voice, called from the inner apartment, asking if "her mother were ill?"

"No, my child, stay where you are, these are not scenes for thee; thou hast enough to weep for," continued she, in a milder and a lower tone. "Oh, sir, what could have tempted you to this terrible deed?"

"The devil, madam—and the devil only, I believe," cried Pen, starting up in his bed?

"Ay," muttered the old woman, who had first befriended him, and would then have betrayed him. "Ay, ay, that's the cant of 'em all; they follow their own vile ways, and then throw the blame upon the devil—as if the old gemman hadn't quite enow of his own sins, without being loaded with ev'ry cut-throat's and cut-purse's—as chooses to cast 'em off upon his shoulders."

"Woman!" exclaimed Pen, who did not choose to be pronounced guilty upon any verdict but his own; "woman! d'ye know to whom you are talking?"

"Woman! ay, marry, do I—to John Brown the murderer;" and slapping the door, that brought its rotten materials to a dangerous test—left the room, and ascended to her own apartments, in which Pen had originally made his free entry.

Our hero now felt himself called upon to afford some explanation of the circumstances which had involved him in such perilous consequences, and sufficiently satisfied his kind protectress, that he was not quite so black—as the devil's advocate, who had just left the room, supposed him to be. He was about to extricate himself from the bed, and, having thanked Mrs Weston for all her charitable exertions in his favour—to seek out his lodgings, where he might repose himself, and gain some relief from the intolerable fatigue and headach, which the wounds and anxiety of his late campaign had occasioned.

She, however, reminded him, that the watchmen were now crying the hour of midnight, and that, having neither hat nor coat, he could not pass through the streets at such a time, and in his present condition, without the hazard of being involved in fresh difficulties and dangers. When to this was added, the probability that some of the officers or their runners, might still be lurking in the neighbourhood, the argument was irresistible.

She advised him to undress, and settle himself comfortably in the bed, which was perfectly at his service; and having a little fire still remaining in the adjoining room, she went out to prepare some tea for him, which, she acknowledged, was the only refreshment it was in her power to offer. Nothing, however, could have been more seasonable to our suffering hero, who gratefully accepted the proffer: and having availed himself of it, in due time tucked himself up in bed, and not having leisure to be restless, was soon in a sound sleep, without the smallest apprehension or qualm upon his conscience—that he was occupying the only bed the poor woman and her daughter possessed, upon which to rest their own sorrowing and wearied heads. Pen, however, did not know this, or probably he would not only have not slept so soundly—but not have slept at all.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OUR hero woke not until roused by the sound of voices in the adjoining apartment, which, after some half visions of doubt and uncertainty, brought him to a sense of his situation, and with it to a recollection of all he had suffered, and all that had been done for him, on the preceding evening. The voices had ceased; and Pen raising his head, called out to Mrs Weston, by name, requesting to speak to her.

“What voice is that?” exclaimed some one within the apartment.

“Hush, hush!” Pen heard his hostess answer; “I must not—cannot tell you, sir.”

“I insist,” was the reply; but something was said, in return, to pacify the questioner, which Pen could not hear. When, however, Mrs Weston came cautiously into the room, not through the door of communication, but by that which opened on the landing-place, he anxiously demanded in his turn—who it was whom he had heard speaking in the adjoining room?

“It is a stranger to you, sir; pray ask no questions; I am not at liberty to answer you; I entreat your silence; your own safety—and mine, perhaps—depends upon it.”

Pen was reasonable, which was no doubt occasioned by the discipline of the preceding day. He lowered his voice, but again whispered a request to know *who* the person was, as he felt *assured* he knew the voice.

"He is a kind benefactor to me and mine," was her answer, "and I shall incur his displeasure if I mention it."

"Be it so," said Pen, not very well satisfied to have his curiosity, which had certainly been excited, thus left ungratified. He might, however, be mistaken in a voice; and having enquired the time of day, found that he had nearly slept the twelve hours round. He resolved immediately to dress himself, and proceed to his lodgings.

Mrs Weston informed him, that the gentleman in the next room was just departing, and requested him to remain quiet for a few minutes.

Pen could offer no objection, and began, as usual, to recal all the errors and misfortunes of his short life, and to arraign himself *in foro conscientie*—condemning or acquitting upon each separate charge, as the evidence appeared to him to warrant. He was not disposed, therefore, to listen to what was going forward in the adjoining room; but it is not to be imagined that the partitions of the second floor of a house in a blind alley, near Smithfield, were calculated or intended for privy councils, or the discussion of secret interests.

Pen, therefore, could not—unless he had stopped his ears with cotton, which he would never have thought of, even had the expedient been at hand—avoid catching an occasional sentence of the conversation that was going forward, whenever the energy or warmth of the principal interlocutor gave it a fuller breath than seemed to be agreeable to Mrs Weston, whose supplications were evidently employed to check it.

The voice which, from the first, he seemed to recognise, was generally restrained; but it at length caught, and fixed his attention, in spite of all the rules of good breeding.

"Why you should conceal his name—and from me too?" The answer, or plea, was returned too indistinctly to be heard by Pen.

"I have my suspicions, and if they are founded, by"—Here again the conversation was interrupted, but renewed in a more subdued tone.

"My reasons, madam!" at length burst forth, as if the provocation was too great to be resented in a piano tone; "my reasons, madam, are such as your imagination cannot reach; they are all-powerful; my life—my happiness—the life and happiness of the being I most prize under heaven"—Here again the voice was quenched.

Again it rose—"I must and will be satisfied. I have had intelligence from the country"—

"To-morrow, then," was the female reply. But a sweeter and more plaintive voice awakened Pen's attention.

"Oh, mother! think of his injunctions."

"What are his injunctions? what have they done for you?" was part of the observation which followed. "You cannot deny he was here last night!" broke, in an indignant tone, from the visiter.

"He was."

"Is he not in the house this moment?"

Pen started up in the bed.

"Indeed, indeed, he is not," answered Mrs Weston.

"Then, why this mystery?—who is concealed in the next room?"

Pen heard no more. The conversation lasted for a few minutes longer, when the visiter evidently rising to depart, said emphatically, as the door creaked on its hinges, "My protection, madam, ceases, if further concealment is necessary. Tush, woman—I will not be silent. If the villain is within hearing, let him hear my resolution. I know him—I have watched him—and he shall not escape me." The door shut with some violence, and Pen was in the act of rushing to the staircase in order to avow himself to the man who had thus declared himself his enemy, when Mrs Weston, just in time, ran between him and the entrance, entreating him to desist, for that her all depended upon the gentleman who had just left the room.

"I know his voice," exclaimed Pen.

"Indeed, indeed, you do not, sir."

"I tell you, madam, it is that infernal"——

"It is no infernal—it is the best of human beings."

"The most depraved. It is Major Irwin!"

The good woman testified the truth of the assertion by her looks, but still faintly denied it.

"How, madam, has this artful man—this plunderer of Asia—this"——

"Indeed, sir, you are deceived."

"No, madam, it is *you* who are deceived. And this the betrayer of innocence—this"——

"Believe me, my good sir, you labour under some sad misapprehension, even if"——

"Even if I know the man! I know him well enough to my cost, and so I fear do you."

"Not I, indeed: if it had not been for him, and for you, sir"——

"Couple us not together, madam, I shrink from the contact. He will persecute you as he has done me, until perhaps, like me, you will be driven to shed man's blood through his villainy."

"What do I hear! shed man's blood—he—the best—the mildest"——

"Mild, good!—heard you not his cowardly threats against me, even in my situation?"

"I repeat, my dear Mr Brown, this is all a mistake; the gentleman who has just left the house, does not even know you."

"Not know me! did you not yourself hear him threaten me?"

"Indeed I did not. He suspected"——

"Ay, ay, suspected; but did he not threaten, where he suspected—and has he not hunted me down—persecuted"——

In thus giving way to his habitual impetuosity, which twelve hours' sound sleep had restored to its pristine vigour, Pen was retracing the sources of his indignation against the major; and whether he began to doubt the justice of imputing to him the guilt in which his own rashness had involved him, or whether he could not recollect sufficient authenticated provocation on that gentleman's part, to warrant the character he was thus lavishly bestowing upon him, is not very necessary to determine. Certain it is, that he said little more upon the subject, which appeared so deeply to agitate his kind hostess; but having dismissed her, he began to dress himself, and had proceeded as far as he was able, before he became fully aware of the inroads made upon his wardrobe. He first missed his cravat, then his coat, and missing also a bell, where a bell had never existed, it all at once occurred to him, that he must call in the aid of an ally.

He proceeded, therefore, into the next room, *en deshabille* having previously announced his intention by a gentle rap at the door, and began to consult with his friend about what was to be done in this dilemma, when his eyes and attention were caught and arrested by an object, if not the most fascinating to his imagination, at least the most interesting that could present itself to the view of a feeling and sensible mind.

Pale and attenuated in form, sat a lovely girl in an old-fashioned arm-chair, supported by coarse, but clean cushions. Her blue eyes, almost concealed by their long dark lashes, were lifted for a moment upon his entrance, and then cast down, as if attracted by some object her fancy had formed in the fire beside which she sat.

Her countenance bespoke suppressed sensibility, and had the character rather of habitual melancholy than overbearing sorrow. It was sweet and plaintive, and such as an angel might be supposed to assume, when ruminating on the cares and crimes of fallen man. She was neatly, but plainly dressed; and a few dark auburn ringlets, which had strayed from beneath a plain cap, gave a grace to a head of which an artist might have made a study for a Madonna. But, alas! it was the head of a magdalen, and poor Rose Weston could not forget that it was so.

She took no notice of Pen Owen, after the first silent salutation, when her mother presented him as their friend, Mr Brown. He gazed upon her in silent admiration; and it was some time before he either recollected he was standing in his undress, or that it was necessary to take measures for equipping himself.

He would have withdrawn again to his chamber, but Mrs Weston requested him to remain where he was; and in answer to a sign from him, which she immediately understood, gently observed to him, that "he would not disturb poor Rose, God bless her, for indeed she attended of late to little that was passing around her." The poor woman wiped away a starting tear, and Pen followed the direction of her eye.

He felt that he had no right to such an indulgence, and recurring to his own wants, asked, if it were possible to find any person to carry a note to his lodgings, for the supply of what he stood in immediate need.

Mrs Weston left the room, to seek the woman who had aided to save, and had nearly aided also to betray him, on the previous night.

It was not easy for Pen to withdraw his eyes from the interesting being, who sat the picture of patient suffering, before him; but the native delicacy of his mind, forced him from the position in which the poor mother had left him, which was directly in front of her child.

Walking, therefore, to the window, which had been opened to admit the fresher air into the confined apartment, and resting on his elbows, in his shirt sleeves, he meditated on the depravity of human nature, and the unfeeling selfishness of man, who could blight so fair and sweet a blossom, and then leave it to perish—to fade—and die.

As his eyes wandered—not over infinite space, where indeed they might have lost themselves, but over the very limited one included within a double row of houses in a city alley, they were involuntarily attracted by two persons, whose eyes, in sympathy, were found to be in a direct line with his own. One pair he immediately recognised as appertaining to Major Irwin himself, who, with an extended hand towards him in an attitude of threatening indignation, uttered an exclamation, which reached the ears of our no less indignant hero, denouncing vengeance on "a villain, whom he had at length detected."

"Yes, sir," cried the almost convulsed major, raising his voice. "I have you now, past redemption;" when, seizing the arm of his companion, he walked briskly away. Pen called out to him to stop, in a voice of thunder, but in vain, and turning round to pursue him, was making towards the door, when Rose Weston, whom his violence appeared to have roused, held

out her arms, and cried in a plaintive voice, "No, no, don't harm him, don't hurt him!"

"Who?" exclaimed Pen, "who?"

"Hush, hush, my good friend," cried Mrs Weston, opening the door, "what's the matter, what has happened?"

"I know not," answered Pen, staring wildly. "I have seen that villain Irwin, and she—that sweet, that fading flower, arrested me, as"—

"Ay, ay," replied her mother, checking him; "pray do not alarm her. You are wrong, indeed you are mistaken—the poor girl means, alas," sobbed out the mother, "she means nothing."

"Don't cry, mamma," said poor Rose, lifting her eyes, upon hearing her mother's sobs. "Indeed, indeed, I am very well; don't cry for me. You, oh, sir," turning to Pen, as if she had seen him for the first time, "oh, sir, do not vex mamma, she has vexations enough."

"Never, never—thou fair drooping flower—on my soul"—

"Nay, nay," cried the girl, with more energy than had yet marked what she said, "do not swear; all men are not false, I will not believe it; but all men who swear may be." Here a sigh broke from her, that would have melted a heart of stone.

"Oh, that the villain," exclaimed Pen, forgetting himself, "that the villain could have heard it!"

"Who?" exclaimed the wretched Rose, starting for the first time from her seat, into which she as instantaneously fell back, still, however, looking with a piercing eye upon Pen Owen's face. "Who?" she again repeated, but almost in a whisper, and sank, as if forgetful of the question, into her habitual posture.

"Is it possible," cried Pen, suppressing his voice, but incapable of checking his feelings; "is it possible," taking the weeping mother as far as possible from her child, "that the black-hearted major is the betrayer of this angel? is it that?"—

"Oh, sir, forbear to be so uncharitable; he is the most humane, generous"—

"D— his generosity, madam; there's something under all this mystery which I must develop. I know him to be—yes, madam—even now I saw him setting a spy upon your lodgings, a watch upon your motions and mine."

"He has reason to be angry with us—to suspect us, my dear sir," answered the poor woman; "we dare not tell him all, and he is entitled to it; but we are forbidden."

"Forbidden! by whom?"

"By —."

"By whom, Mrs Weston? I must know, for by all that is dear to me in life, I will right you, if you and that angel sufferer can

be righted by an arm of flesh, and if not, I will pray for you—kneel for you to the throne of mercy, and invoke curses on the villain who”——

“Hush, hush,” cried Mrs Weston, again interrupting him.

Pen at this moment felt that he had no business on earth but to redeem this lost and suffering creature: he thought no more of his own dangers—the alarm of pursuit—his being apprehended as a murderer—his—yes, his love for Ellice Craig he *did* think of; and it was that love which seemed to identify her, and every thing that was pure and amiable, with the cause of afflicted loveliness before him. He had made up his mind: he did not know what to conclude concerning Major Irwin; but something more than an ordinary villain he felt he must be. Him he determined to seek out, and to demand an explanation respecting his conduct towards himself, as well as the nature of his connexion with his hostess and her daughter.

“The black major shall explain all this,” cried he, going towards the window, to see if he had returned. “Madam, he has already driven me to desperation, and you to destruction, (whispering to his staring auditor)—he is persecuting you—he is driving that child of misfortune (pointing to the daughter) to madness. He shall answer—he shall atone for the evil he has perpetrated among his fellow-creatures abroad and at home, in”——

“For Heaven’s sake, sir, have done!—you will rob me of my best, I had almost said my only friend. We had been houseless wanderers, but for the humanity, the charity of Major Irwin!”

“What!—he can feel for the havoc he has committed: he can weep crocodile tears over the ruin he has made. Madam, madam, let me ask,” going closer, and in a more firm but confidential tone, “why does he not marry her?”

“Marry whom, sir?—he”——

“Why not make the only reparation now in his power?”

Mrs Weston recollected her suspicions respecting the sanity of our friend Pen in her former intercourse with him, and they were about to be renewed; but, on his repeating the question, she felt that she might have misunderstood him; and, asking again to whom he alluded, his reply, “Her betrayer, to be sure,” led her to reply, drawing closer to his ear, “He has faithfully promised—indeed he has, if we are secret—he has been here—but”——

“But what?” asked Pen.

“The poor child has heard that he is—that he must extricate himself from some other engagement.”

“Another engagement!” exclaimed Pen; “no, no, that en-

gagement shall be with me. I will unravel the mystery—I will bring him to a reckoning. I”——

“Indeed, my dear, kind friend, you do not know him.”

“Not know him! Must I repeat again and again that it is *you* who do not know him. You shall see, and he shall feel, that I know him too well. But I will—yes, I will forgive him all, if he will on his knees, and before Heaven, acknowledge his duty there,” pointing to Rose, who sat now with her eyes fixed upon him. She could only have heard what he said imperfectly, had she listened; but it was the energy of his manner which seemed to strike and arrest her attention. She appeared to be unconcerned in the conversation, even if any had reached her ear.

“Is he come?” she asked in a meek voice.

“No, my angel, not yet; he fixed four o’clock, you know.”

“Four! I forget how time goes now—four o’clock.” She looked at Pen again, and he thought her wishes asked a question which he might anticipate. He put his hand to his fob—but he had no watch. He looked to the sun, which shone bright for the region of Smithfield, and observed that it could not be more than “one o’clock.”

A smile, which shone through a watery eye, seemed to thank Pen for his ready attention to her wishes. His smile, in return, for a moment arrested her attention; but she again cast her eye down, and whilst the tear which had before started fell upon her cheek, she sighed, in a voice scarcely audible, “It was thus HE smiled!”

Mrs Weston now informed Pen—who could hardly be brought to listen to her—that her neighbour was ready at the door to take a note to his lodgings; and having procured a slip of paper, he wrote, with a pencil, an order for what he wanted, and dispatched the messenger to his landlady, whose name, by some accident, not necessary at present to be accounted for, he recollected to be—Grub. The euphony, perhaps, had struck his ear which was very musically constructed.

Pen sat silent, contemplating the scene before him, and pondering upon the means of bursting with effect upon Major Irwin, with the information he now possessed of his baseness, and made up his mind to wade through fire and water to obtain justice for the injured Rose Weston.

He endeavoured more than once to draw his good hostess into some further details respecting the author of her misfortunes; and although she declined adding to what he already knew, her persevering defence of Major Irwin only served to convince him that she was a slave to his tyranny, and awed into this defence of his conduct and character by the appre-

hension of vengeance, so intelligibly pronounced in his late parting words. "Good Heavens!" he almost audibly ejaculated as he started from his seat, "that such a piece of dried parchment should have so fascinated a being like this, as to make her forget every other duty."

A tap at the door disturbed these reflections, and announced the arrival of his messenger; and putting his hand in his pocket to reward her for her trouble, he found that he had not a sou. He apologized for the omission, and very naturally accounted for it by a reference to his adventures on the preceding night. Retiring, therefore, to his chamber to equip himself, he began to reflect upon the hazard he ran of being discovered, by appearing in the clothes he usually wore, having lost the equipments provided by his friend Wettenhall for the campaign—in the very first action. He had, however, no alternative; and had scarcely armed himself, like a second Quixote, for the purpose of pursuing his adventures, when Mrs Weston knocked at the door, and, on being admitted, presented a face of horror, to which none but the pencil of Fuseli could have done justice. She was pale—she was ghastly—and hastily throwing herself into a chair, fell back in it. Beckoning the astonished Pen towards her, she asked him, in a voice scarcely articulate from agitation, whether "he was really guilty of the deadly crime with which he was charged?"

"What crime?" he demanded.

"Murder!" was her reply.

Pen, shocked at having his act so unceremoniously classed, started back; but recollecting himself, answered with a sigh—

"I certainly have—killed a man!"

"And is not that murder?" exclaimed the poor woman. "Oh! what will become of you—what will become of me and mine?"

"Be pacified, my good Mrs Weston," cried Pen, "I only—yes—by Heaven, it *was* murder, cool deliberate murder. What had I to do with shooting a man for walking in Kensington Gardens?"

"Shoot!"

"Yes, yes, I deserve all that can follow."

"Well, then—the Lord have mercy upon you, for you have not long to live. The bloodhounds are after you—you cannot escape."

"I don't wish to escape—no, no," cried Pen in an agony of mixed feeling. "What have I to expect in life?" Then turning to the poor woman, who seemed to feel more for his situation than he did himself, he continued in a milder tone, "Do not, do not, my good friend, worry yourself on my account; you have

cares enough of your own. I shall stand my trial—I always intended it.”

“Stand your trial!—rather fly while you have it in your power. Here, take my clothes—disguise yourself; here are a few pounds; the major”——

“Hell and fury, woman! The major! D’ye think I’ll take the wages of prosti—— Hold, hold!” as if checking the base insinuation of another, rather than himself—“no, my good mother, for such you have proved yourself to me—the major shall answer”——

“Answer! But who shall answer for thee, when the laws of God and thy country”——

“I fear nothing—my conscience, not they, will condemn me.”

“Your conscience! True, true, unhappy young man! What could have tempted thee to such an act? Oh, who will trust to looks again! My poor Rose! What are looks, what are vows? I would have trusted my life, my child, and fortunes, when they were at their height, to *thee* in a wilderness!”

“And so—so indeed might you now,” cried Pen, almost softened to the weakness he had laboured to support, “I only acted in self-defence.”

“Oh, say not so; say nothing. I wish to think you innocent; to see you safe is all my prayer.” At this moment the door of the other apartment opened, and Rose Weston, evidently alarmed by the vehemence of her mother’s exclamations, stood on the threshold, and, as if awaking out of a trance in which her whole faculties had been absorbed, she burst into a flood of tears, and rushed to her mother’s arms.

“My child,” exclaimed the agitated mother, “do not alarm yourself. I am well, and I thank God you can weep now—weep freely.”

Pen recollected her former prescription; but the scene was too solemn for any thing like levity to dwell for a moment upon it. Rose turned her head as it lay upon her mother’s breast, and, with an imploring look at Pen, seemed to deprecate his repeating any offence he might have committed against her parent. He understood her silent appeal, and, in the most soothing manner, requested Mrs Weston to dismiss him and his affairs from her mind.

“Did you say,” whispered Rose with a look of terror, which seemed to have been called up by a sudden recollection—“did you say he was murdered?”

“No, my child; it is no such thing.”

“You said so,” repeated the daughter, as if the impression became stronger on her mind; and she looked earnestly and piteously in Pen’s face.

"Oh!" screamed she, perceiving an extraordinary degree of agitation in his countenance, "you have murdered him, you have destroyed him!" Then pausing, she raised herself from her mother's bosom, "Oh, why," said she, weeping, to her mother, "why did you consent? He might not be so guilty—he might have relented."

"Indeed, indeed, my beloved," cried the mother drawing her to her embrace, "you mistake—he"——

"Hush, hush, mother; do not mention him. He said, you know, that if we betrayed him, his life might be endangered."

"Name him to me," exclaimed Pen, "and I will draw his life's blood, rather than"——

"Help, help—there—there, for the love of mercy—his murderer is upon him," screamed the distracted girl, who again hid her face, half fainting, on her mother's breast.

"You should not be so violent, my dear sir; see how you distress the dear child."

"No!—don't be violent with him," whispered the daughter, as she turned again to Pen, who could not restrain her tears.

"Oh, sir," whispered Mrs Weston, as she looked on him, "how with such feelings could you be guilty"——

"Is he guilty?" demanded Rose.

"Yes,"—cried Pen's messenger, who had entered the room without ceremony—"see here, neighbour Western, what I told you of"—opening and spreading out a large printed sheet of paper, on which were distinctly to be read at a mile's distance—"ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS REWARD!—MURDER! JOHN BROWN!" Pen started back with horror and surprise. Poor Rose looked first at him—then upon the paper—and then at her mother, as seeking for information.

Mrs Weston could give none; she burst into a new flood of tears—and led her daughter into the other room, whither she was followed by her officious neighbour, who evidently declined remaining alone in the room with a murderer. Pen threw himself, in despair, upon the bed—he could scarcely believe he was awake. He taxed himself with every act of imprudence of which he had been guilty; and then murmured against a decree, which he pronounced to be inflicted with a too heavy hand, by the Supreme Disposer of events. He recollected himself—and falling upon his knees, deprecated the vengeance of Heaven.

He had, indeed, embred his hands in the blood of a fellow-creature.—The Almighty had set his mark upon the crime—and what law of man could wash it away? Custom might reconcile it—justice might wink at it—society might sanction it—but conscience told him it was forbidden;—and that blood

for blood was the law of nature, that cried up to the very gates of heaven for justice.

"Let the law of man, then," he cried, amid tears of remorse, "have its course—it is fitting that a sinner like myself should have all the ignominy, as well as punishment of my crime. I might palliate it to man—I cannot reconcile it to my God ;—but repentance may ensure even his pardon."

Mrs Weston had overheard him—and though she could not fully comprehend, she understood sufficient of what he uttered aloud in this soliloquy, to be sure that he was neither depraved nor hardened. She retired from the door, from the delicate apprehension of interrupting him, in which she judged and felt as nicely as the most refined of her sex would have done, under the same circumstances.

After waiting ten minutes, during which she did not hear him either speak or move, she ventured to open the door, and, to her surprise and horror, found the apartment vacant. She called upon him, then checked herself, as she recollected the fatal name, to which so awful a notoriety now attached ; but running up, and afterwards down stairs, she found the street-door of the house open—and concluded he had rashly ventured out, and would inevitably fall into the hands of justice.

Pen had, indeed, quietly let himself out and descended, on the conclusion of the soliloquy we have just overheard, fully determined to spare his benevolent protectress, as well as himself, the distressing recapitulation of the dangers and horrors by which he was surrounded. He passed along the crowded streets, attracting no notice, and apparently without being watched, although he apprehended a thief-taker in every pair of eyes that happened to fall within range of his own, and was almost prepared to surrender his person to any individual who chanced to be standing still, or whose face did not bespeak the activity of business. A more serious cause of alarm occurred, however, as he advanced ; for he saw groups of twenty or thirty persons at the several corners of the streets, reading, some aloud, and some making their comments upon, large placards, offering a reward from the Secretary of State's office for the apprehension of JOHN BROWN, &c.

He contrived to reach his lodging without being intercepted, and having knocked at the door, which was opened by his landlady, he darted up stairs, and felt himself once more at liberty, since he was within the walls of his own castle. The landlady, however, followed him, and, on pretence of stirring his fire, looked with the eyes of curiosity and penetration, upon the features and dress of our hero. He observed this, and asked her what she wanted. She replied, "she hoped no offence, but that

she had been kept up half the night waiting for him, and must say it was hard for those who worked all day, to be kept out of their beds all night ;—that she was a regular woman, and her family a regular family, and such doings were not at all in her way.”

“Peace, peace, my good woman, it was an accident !”

“An accident, truly ! What, I suppose, it was an accident that lost you your clothes ; and”——

“It was !—Say no more about it, you shall be satisfied. I shall give you no more cause to complain ;” then lifting up an ebony ink-stand that stood on the table before him, as if to show he had some business to do, he stared, upon beholding several bank-notes ; and, if the truth must be told, so did the honest Mrs Grub, who knew no more of their being there than poor Pen himself, who thought, without thinking at all, that his pockets had been picked of all the wealth he possessed on earth.

“The deuce !” cried he, “what notes are these ?” The question was not lost upon mine hostess.

“Oh, I dare say, my husband ; I’ll go and enquire your honour.”

“No, no !” answered Pen ; “I recollect now—here is the man’s name upon them. I forgot—this is an unexpected turn of fortune ; who knows—you may go, my good Mrs Grub.”

“May I,” quoth the lady, who seemed to be unaccountably angry with our hero for recovering his memory so inopportunately—and flung out of the room, muttering something about “being up to him,” which Pen either did not hear, or did not regard ; for he turned immediately to the table, to which he sat down, with a determination of arranging some plan of fixed conduct, in the present perplexed and embarrassed state of his affairs.

He, with some difficulty, obtained, in the course of the afternoon, a newspaper, in which he learned that the Old Bailey sessions would commence in a few days. He took a sheet of paper, and entering into a statement of facts connected with the duel, addressed himself to the Lord Chief-Justice of England ; resolving to surrender himself on the Monday following, which was the day previous to the opening of the sessions. When he had finished the paper, he threw himself back in his chair, and appeared lost in thought ; which, considering the nature and bulk of the matter which his reflections had to feed upon, was natural enough. How long this process of mental digestion lasted, is not very important to ascertain ; suffice it to say, it was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs Grub, with a second edition of unsavoury cutlets, which he felt it prudent to prefer to more sumptuous fare abroad. She produced at the same time

a letter, which she presented to him ; saying, that a ticket-porter had just left it at the door.

"The devil take all ticket-porters !" exclaimed our hero, snatching it out of her hand.

His hostess sneered at the denunciation against so innocent and so useful a race of men. He observed not the sneer, but, following up the association thus suggested, he was not much surprised at finding the present billet written in the same hand as that which had been delivered to him in the presence of Major Irwin ; he tore it open, and read as follows :—

"The friend who has long watched over your interests as a guardian angel, again warns you to beware of impending danger. You were enabled to avoid the snares laid for you on a former occasion ; they encompass you in a tenfold degree at this moment ; do not rashly encounter them. They are drawing more closely around you ; and, beyond the present day, your fate will be no longer in your own hands. If you meet the arbiter of that fate again, you are undone. YOU KNOW HIM ; he is your persecutor, but you cannot now avenge your wrongs upon him. If you are not infatuated, listen to the only voice, which, in solitude and confinement, can reach you. Return not on your life, to the spot where you were seen this morning. You are a proscribed man, and the sword of justice is suspended over you ; you are no longer safe in this country. Fly to Portsmouth ; enquire for one Giles Grant, who lives on the Common Hard. If you want money, he will supply you : and will bear you to a place of safety. At the hazard of my life, perhaps, I have made this effort in your favour. Fail not as you value yours—nay, more, your character ! your honour !"

It is not to be supposed, that our hero read this paper in such a regular and orderly manner as you, gentle reader, have been enabled to do ; marking all the stops, and sounding every sentence, as if you had been employed as reading clerk in Parliament.

No ! our friend Pen, as usual, snatched sentence by sentence, without waiting for conclusions, which his own imagination could draw quicker than the pen of the most ready writer. He raved at some, wept at others ; and upon a re-perusal, or in connexion with each other, he wept where before he had raved, and *vice versâ*. You may smile, my good readers, but say what you will, the letter was a puzzling and alarming sort of thing ; and if it had been purposely written to inspire a man with apprehension and doubt, and to make him feel as if an invisible hand was just setting fire to a train under the room, to blow him and his cares to atoms in a moment, it could not have been more skilfully planned.

But Pen did not reason like most men, or if he did, he had a way

peculiar to himself, of laying down the premises, before he set about the process. The very insinuation that his character and honour were to be saved by an ignominious flight, convinced him, in a moment, that *they* would suffer less, even if *he* were to suffer more, by remaining and facing his danger. He might be hanged, indeed, but that was a secondary consideration; and he was not to be deterred from what he considered right and proper to be done, by a bugbear. I have reason to believe, his imagination had been so fully employed upon other matters, that he never had pictured to himself the details of a modern execution; and it may have been with him, as an ingenious barrister observed to a *hanging* judge, that his lordship probably had never thought that there was any great pain or trouble in the operation of *sus. per. coll.* As for Major Irwin, the very intimation that danger was to be apprehended from him, only served to exasperate his passions, and to determine him upon taking immediate measures, to set his utmost malice at defiance.

He concluded, that the warning given him by his timid guardian, (and who could it be but his beloved Ellice Craig?) was to prevent a meeting with his enemy; and as he knew he was by appointment to be at Mrs Weston's lodgings on the morrow, thither he most manfully determined to repair betimes, in order to confront him, and bring him to a final explanation.

At ten o'clock the next morning, accordingly, our hero left his apartment, and was descending for the purpose of proceeding direct to Mrs Weston's lodgings, when he was intercepted by his landlady at the foot of the stairs, who expressed her surprise at his going out so early; which surprise was partaken, but expressed in turn by Pen, in terms somewhat bordering upon indignation, at the presumption on the lady's part; who was accordingly desired to mind her own business, and not to meddle with his incomings, or outgoings.

Pen was as unlucky in his landladies as in his ticket-porters.

She retorted, that it was her business to see after the conduct of her lodgers; and if she warn't "pretty sure," very emphatically marked was the expression in voice and eye; "that Mr Brown would soon be provided with another lodging, she wouldn't put up with it."

"Woman, you are impertinent, and beneath my notice. I shall be back in a short time, and will settle with you. I sleep no more beneath your roof." So saying, our friend Pen walked off, without bestowing even a further reflection upon the words or insolence of good Mrs Grub.

Not so the lady.

"No! no!" quoth she, turning into her parlour; "you'll sleep no more here, I warrant you; nor any where else, much

longer. Here, Frank," calling up a boy, "do you go and follow this here Mister Brown, and see which way he goes. Be sure you don't miss him, young Careless: it'll be a good hundred pounds out of my way." Off went the boy—"Nanny, do you run to Tom Cribb's, and ask what the devil he's about. Tell him the bird's flown, he should have been here by nine, as I told him. There's no trusting to these male creturs."

From the enemy's camp, proceed we to overtake poor Pen, who construed the incivility of his hostess into a mere ebullition of passion, at having the regularity of her hours broken in upon; and would as soon have suspected a woman, had he troubled himself to suspect at all, of intending to blow up the king and parliament, as of selling his blood for a reward. He walked on, not, however, entirely free from suspicions of others, who might in the way of business be disposed to do him this good office; but meeting with no interruption or impediment, had arrived within a few yards of the turning which led to Mrs Weston's abode, when he perceived, at about thirty paces before him, a female form in an attitude of resistance, upon the step of a hackney-coach; an arm from within evidently grasping one of hers; and a person from without as evidently forcing her forward into the carriage, the coachman on his box waiting the signal, with uplifted whip, to start with the party, when all should be ready.

Pen, with the rapidity of lightning, was master of the whole business. Rose Weston had been torn from her mother, and Major Irwin was the ravisher. Two leaps brought him within the reach of one of the parties, although the door had been closed upon the victim before his fist had brought an auxiliary, who was preparing to mount the box, to the ground. He grasped the handle of the door—a voice of thunder from the opposite side of the coach commanded the coachman to drive on. The man whipped his horses into a canter, which nearly overset Pen, who still held the handle of the door in his grasp, and suffered himself to be dragged some yards—the glass was let down, and his hand violently struck from within, the suddenness of which made him to lose its hold; but, at the same moment, a female voice caught and vibrated on the heart-strings of Pen Owen, calling upon him, by name, to save her. It was *ELlice CRAIG*! He flew—he caught again the door, and fixed his hand within—he felt the power, the strength, the energy of a giant. At this instant, a blow from behind felled him to the ground—he was only snatched from beneath the wheel in time to save him from being crushed, and reserved for sufferings, when he came to his recollection, which I shall not venture to describe or paint.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE imagination of the reader, with his knowledge of our hero's character, may enable him to conceive, in some degree, what were his sensations when he awoke to the conviction that he was in the hands of justice. He appealed in turn to each of the three persons who were seated with him in a hackney coach. He swore to follow them peaceably to the world's end, if they would but allow him to pursue the coach in which his Ellice had been carried off. He promised them fortune, affluence, the mines of Golconda, if they would grant him but half an hour's respite.

When, however, they laughed at his offers, and jested upon his sufferings, he denounced vengeance, and prepared to execute it in a style, and with an earnestness, that they were compelled to fall upon him in a body, and, fixing handcuffs on his wrists, threatened him with even stronger measures if he did not immediately submit.

Their threats were vain : his fury and violence increased to absolute insanity—he roared, he swore, till the consciousness of his childish helplessness brought a flood of tears to his assistance, and he fell on his knees at the bottom of the carriage, again imploring, entreating, adjuring them, as they were fathers and husbands, to have mercy on him, to have pity upon him, and to go with him in pursuit of the coach. Again he imprecated the vengeance of Heaven on his head, if he attempted to escape from them. He told them he meant to surrender himself—that he had no intention to conceal his person.

"Like enough, my lad!" cried one of his keepers with a hoarse laugh, "we know ye a bit better than to trust ye, man. What! you were ready to surrender, I suppose, when we sent the pop-guns ater you at Mason's the other night, hey?"

"Do you doubt me, scoundrel?" cried Pen, raving, and again forgetting his situation.

"Oh no, my hearty, we've no doubt, and don't mean to have none!" said a second.

"Come, come, no palaver here. Why, one would think," cried a third, winking at his companions, "that he was now upon the lay. Ye need not be shy with us, young fellow: we've knowed your pranks long enow. Why, I didn't think ye'd be sich a sniveller ater all to shame your gang."

"My gang! thou infernal!"—

"Hold your tongue, sirrah!" cried the tipstaff: "don't come for to go to be ungenteel. You've met with civil treatment so far; and, as for you're dying game, that's for you to settle with

your conscience, and them as herds with ye. Ye can't turn, however, my lad : the murder's clear agen you : so I don't see much good ye'll get by peaching ater all."

Pen, we have long acknowledged, was no philosopher ; but he felt how powerless he was, and how useless was either altercation or reasoning with the people who now had charge of him. Despair sat upon his countenance, which was almost livid with agitation. In his agony he had bitten his lips through, and the blow he had received in the first instance had suffused his eyes with coagulated blood. His clothes were in disorder from the struggles in which he had been engaged ; and when he was lifted out of the carriage, and conveyed through an expectant crowd, (for every avenue had been secured for his apprehension,) it was not surprising that many among them declared his very countenance and appearance were sufficient to prove " what the fellow was."

Our unfortunate hero was conducted to a strong room, strictly watched and guarded, not, as he apprehended, in one of the police-offices, but in that of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Every minute the door of the room opened, and some one made his appearance, obviously for the purpose of identifying the person of the prisoner. To each, in succession, did Pen address himself, entreating to be heard, to be examined, and to be disposed of—trusting to circumstances which might still enable him to pursue, by proxy at least, the disturber of his peace, and the ravisher of Ellice Craig.

That Major Irwin was the man he entertained not a doubt ; for, although he at first mistook the object, and supposed Rose Weston to be the person thus outraged, still he recollected that the poor mother had hinted, in her confused communication, that " there was another object " which stood in the way of her child's peace.

A thousand circumstances had arisen to the vivid imagination of Pen, which tended to confirm his conviction. The threat he had heard the major utter against him the day before—his system of watching his motions, and the knowledge of his being concealed in the lodgings of Mrs Weston, all contributed to fix him in the views he had taken of the case.

He no longer hesitated as to the cause and manner of Ellice Craig's first elopement. She had been torn from her family by the major, whose mysterious conduct now stood explained ; and she had contrived an escape, probably to fly to himself, when she was again arrested by her vile ravisher. Why had the major sought his acquaintance in town, which he had avoided in the country ? Why had he set a watch upon him, if not to secure himself from any interference in his atrocious schemes ?

A thousand and a thousand plans had rapidly succeeded each other in his mind, and passed like electric sparks in succession, before he could fix upon any one plausible, even to his sanguine imagination, or practicable to his purpose. At length, as if by inspiration, he felt he had an expedient at hand; and, turning to the only one of his captors who remained in the room with his new attendants, he requested to speak with him apart. He told him, not as was usual with him, his whole story, but those parts of it only as were connected with Ellice Craig; and, entering into such details as might enable his new ally, with the skill and address of his official pursuits, to ascertain the movements, and identify the person of Major Irwin. He promised him a most extraordinary reward if he could gain the necessary intelligence, or arrest the fugitives on their way.

"Why look ye, master," answered the man, "ye haven't conducted yourself in the genteelest way, as I may say, to the gemmen as nabbed you; but I pass over that here, seeing as how it's no ways pleasant to be stopped short when one doesn't expect it; and we're some way used to that here sort of thing. Therefore I drop the genteelness of your behavior altogether, as I may say"—

"Will you undertake the job?" cried Pen, interrupting him.

"Patience, my master: we never does things in a hasty manner on these here occasions: so much for that. But pray now, let me ax ye, Master Brown, what d'ye see in my face?"

Pen looked full upon it, but did not choose to trust his ingenuousness with a reply.

"D'ye see gull written on it? Look ye, young fellow, all this flam wont go down with me. D'ye think I'm a pigeon, to come to your hand and be made an evidence of the Lord knows what rigmarole about majors and misses? Why, Heaven love your precious eyes, I thought you'd knowed better. They han't described you well, to my mind. Thee seem'st no better than a sapling, or thee tak'st me for one. I'll tell ye a bit o' my mind: you had better be thinking how you may glib the gemmen up stairs. You wont do me, I promise ye."

What the ingenuous mind of our poor friend, Pen, suffered at the injurious insinuations which he only half understood, or how he was stung by the reflection, that he could no longer knock a man down at his own discretion, upon receiving what he considered an adequate provocation, may be easily conjectured. He felt somewhat like a wretch wedged in a narrow pass, from which he finds all efforts to extricate himself vain, whilst the horrors of suffocation are fast gaining upon him. Madness, or something akin to it, would assuredly have ensued, had he not, at this critical moment, been summoned to attend the

board, which was now assembled for his examination above stairs.

He was conducted into a large and elegant room, in which several persons, evidently of the superior order of men, were seated at a long table. One, who seemed to preside, was placed at the head of it, and towards the bottom sat a clerk or secretary, with writing materials before him; a barrister, also, took his place at the lower end of the board. Near the upper end was a vacant chair; and as Pen was led to the foot of the table, the president observed to the gentlemen around him, that they could no longer wait for his lordship, but must proceed to business. A general assent was nodded, and all eyes were directed towards our hero.

His appearance seemed to create some general observation among the members of this court, who whispered each other, whilst their eyes were fixed upon him. The president, however, striking on the board, desired that the examination might be entered upon.

Pen, who was not a nice observer of time or place, thought this a favourable opportunity of urging the hardship of his situation.

"Gentlemen," he began, in a tone very unlike that of a criminal, "I am aware many forms are necessary on occasions like the present; but, as far as I am concerned, I am content to waive them. I acknowledge myself guilty, and"—

"Hold, sir!" cried the lawyer, "I am here to perform my duty equally towards you and to the honourable council. Allow me to warn you against any unnecessary admission which may tend to criminate yourself. What you are about to say must form part of the evidence"—

"I am obliged to you, sir," replied Pen, interrupting him; "but so far from wishing to avoid self-crimination, it has all along been my intention to surrender myself, and to take my trial for the crime of which I have been guilty."

"Indeed, Mr Brown, you are wrong," observed the president, "not to be governed by what Mr Attorney has suggested to you. Prudence"—

"Sir," returned our hero, "prudence is out of the question. I act under no impulse of fear—conscience and honour are my guides, and"—

Here he was again checked by a member of the court, who told him, at least, to wait until such questions had been put to him as were necessary to substantiate his guilt.

"What need of all this?" he retorted; "I am guilty, I admit, of murder, if it must needs be called so; and so it ought, indeed, to be esteemed in the eyes of God and men. I am not, however,

on my trial, I presume; and what I may have to say in my defence may as well be reserved to that solemn occasion, when, if I be condemned by the laws of my country, as I stand convicted in my conscience, and at the tribunal of Heaven, I shall submit to my fate without a murmur."

The court seemed thunderstruck—they gazed on each other, and then looked upon Pen, whom they suffered to proceed, literally because they were too much surprised to interrupt him.

"All this, therefore, may be quickly disposed of; but, gentlemen, there is an interest much nearer to my heart—an interest that brings me on my knees before you. My life I would disdain to ask, if it be duly forfeit; but to rescue innocence from ruin, to snatch the companion of my childhood, the twin-being of my soul, from horrors too mighty to be contemplated without madness, I would"—

"Whither, sir, are you hurrying?" cried the lawyer, again interposing.

"To my purpose," cried Pen indignantly. "I appeal to you, gentlemen, as men of education and humanity, to suffer me, with whatever guard or attendants may be thought necessary to secure me against evasion—if my honour, which has never yet been doubted, be insufficient—to pursue the ravisher of innocence, to hunt down to the world's verge, the wretch who has dared to outrage the principles of humanity, and to force from her friends, and from these arms, the purest of created beings, the most angelic of women!" Here he burst into a passion of tears.

"Here must surely be some mistake," observed a member of the board, who appeared to be affected by the agitation of our hero.

"He is evidently deranged," observed another aside.

"Or affects it," returned the lawyer.

The president, however, answered Pen's appeal, by observing "that it was wholly out of the power or province of the council to comply with any request of the nature now proposed. The order of proceeding must be regularly complied with, and the prisoner must submit to the interrogatories about to be put to him."

"And suffer Ellice Craig," exclaimed Pen, almost foaming with agitation, "to be torn from the country, perhaps, and outraged by every species of cruelty and insult."

"We can hear no more of this!" cried the president, with more asperity than had before appeared; "the prisoner must be brought up for examination another time, if his present state of mind disqualifies him from answering the questions necessary to be put."

"Put them then," cried Pen, in a tone of querulous but submitting despair; "I have a letter ready, written to the Lord Chief-Justice, in my pocket, which would render all further examination unnecessary."

"Produce that letter," said the president.

Pen put his hand in his pockets, but found that they were empty, and starting, exclaimed that he had been robbed. One of his captors who remained at his back, here produced a small bundle, in which he stated were the contents of what had been taken from the prisoner's pocket—an operation which had been performed whilst our hero lay senseless from the blow received on his first capture. This was laid upon the table, and being untied, two pistols fell out, together with loose papers and other miscellaneous matter, among which appeared to be a sealed letter, addressed, To the Lord Chief-Justice of England.

"Are the pistols loaded?" asked a member.

"They *were*," answered Pen with perfect coolness.

"Indeed!" exclaimed more voices than one.

"They are upon half cock," said Pen, observing the alarm they had created. They were removed to another part of the room. The president took the sealed letter, and laid it on a portfolio before him. A pause enabled the president to begin the examination.

"Your name, sir—is John Brown!" taking up a pen, and the secretary dipping his into the inkstand.

"My name is Pendarves Owen," answered Pen with dignity; "there is no further necessity to affect mystery."

"Bless me!" exclaimed one of the board; "I recollect him; it was he who," and he whispered the circumstance of his adventure in the House of Commons. All eyes were again fixed upon poor Pen, who, absorbed in his own reflections, heeded not the increased attention he had drawn upon himself.

"A Bellingham!" said one—a nod affirmative from another.

"We suspected," observed the president, "that John Brown was not your real name; may we ask upon what occasion you assumed it?"

"Upon the only occasion that could have tempted me, against my better judgment, to an artifice so contemptible—to save my person from a prison, at a moment when it was essential to my first object in life to be at liberty."

"Candid at least," said one of the board.

"And pray, sir, when was that?"

"Immediately after—my misfortune."

"What do you particularly call your misfortune?"

"That which I imbrued my hands in—the blood of a fellow-creature," answered Pen, overcome with the recollection.

"Honest!" observed one.

"And not hardened!" returned his neighbour

"What could have induced you to commit an act, the enormity of which you seem now so duly to appreciate?" asked the president.

"Infatuation, and the false notions of independence which man in his pride considers essential to his honour."

"Mistaken notions indeed! It is a pity they had not presented themselves to your mind in sufficient force before you were hurried into the commission of such a crime."

"Goad me not with reproaches," cried Pen angrily; "the sting is strong enough here," pointing emphatically to his heart.

"This is strange!" observed the president to one near him; "and yet—pray, Mr Owen, had you no accomplice or accomplices in this affair?"

"One only, and he was fatally drawn in by me; he is, however, I trust, safe, and will not suffer for my crime."

"Have you any objection to reveal his name?"

"None; it was Frank Wettenhall!"

"Mr Secretary, have you set that down?" asked the lawyer.

"Do you know where this person is now to be found?"

"I do not; it was his determination to leave the kingdom, when we last parted."

"Where is his usual residence?"

"In Wigmore street;" here the address was taken down, and some orders were given, to which Pen paid no attention. He had not hesitated to give the information respecting Wettenhall, first, from his natural abhorrence of any thing mysterious or disingenuous; secondly, because, if he had left the country, it was a matter of no consequence, and if he was still in town, the near approach of the sessions would prevent any great inconvenience to him. He had no apprehension as to any ultimate consequences of the trial, to him at all events. After some consultation, the examination was again resumed.

"Where did you sleep, Mr Owen," asked the president, "on the night of the murder?"

"The term is a strong one, though a just one, sir. I was not aware at the time that the blow had been fatal, although I feared it. I therefore went to a lodging, prepared by my friend for me, in —. Upon my soul, sir, I forget the name of it—an obscure court, in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell."

"Good—Do you know the name of your landlady?"

"It is Grub."

"Did you ever employ this woman for the purpose of carrying on your schemes?"

"Employ that woman!—Surely not."

"Recollect yourself, Mr Owen ; did you never use her as the agent of a secret correspondence ?"

"I never exchanged ten words with her."

"Produce the witness."

Here Mrs Grub made her appearance, with a succession of curtsies, before the board. Being confronted with the prisoner, who was not a little astonished at the magic power by which a woman, he had so recently parted with at the foot of her own staircase, was thus wafted into his presence in another hemisphere. After some preliminary questions touching her identity, she was asked, whether "she knew the prisoner ?" She answered in the affirmative.

"How long have you known him ?"

"Ever since, your honours, he come to my 'ouse !"

"And when was that ?"

"On Monday evening last, your worships."

"What did he call himself ?"

"Mr John Brown, an please your highnesses."

"And what was his real name ?"

"Can't have no reason to say, your mightinesses."

"Indeed, sir," cried Pen, interrupting the court, "this is a mere waste of time ; I acknowledge every thing."

"We must not be interrupted, Mr Owen. Had you reason (the president turning to the woman) to believe, that he came to your house for the purpose of concealment ?"

"Yes ! I had, your majesties ; for 'is friend, who is no better, I believe, than he should be, went out and boughten an ould bell-veather great-coat, and a at as vasn't vorth picking out of the kennel."

"Did you observe any thing particular in his conduct ?"

"Very peeticular, your greatnesses ; for he knocked about my farniter as if hit ad been so much lumber ; and he broked my chimley bow-pot to hatoms."

"Psha !—Did he employ you to do any thing for him ?"

"Yes, your highnesses ! he made me cuk 'is dinner, and then never touched a morsel, th'of I made it as savory as"—

"Never mind your cooking, good woman ; did he never employ you to do any thing else ?"

"Yes, your majesties ; he gave me, and a lad as I 'ployed, money, to carry things to the newspapers."

"That's to the point ; of what nature were these things ?"

"They was all glum gliffies, your highnesses."

"How do you know what they were ?"

"Cause, your worships, the vafers was vet ; so I peeped in for suspicion's sake."

"Audacious woman !" exclaimed Pen.

"Pray, do not, Mr Owen, interrupt the witness; you may cross-examine her hereafter, if you please."

"Ay, your honourables, he can be cross enow ven he pleases; but I wouldn't submit to 'em, and vont now."

"Silence, woman!" exclaimed the president, in a voice that awed her into acquiescence.—"Since you did look into these papers, may we ask of what they consisted?—What do you mean by glum gliffies?"

"Why, la! as I told your excellencies; there was—lork—I av one on 'em by me," said she, fumbling for it in her pocket.

"One of my letters!" exclaimed Pen; "why thou most!"

"Silence, prisoner!—and how came you to retain this?"

"For curiosity, your highnesses."

"And" (upon examining it) "to pocket the price of the advertisement."

The woman hung down her head.—The paper was read; and we, who are a little aware of the nature of Pen's style, of striking off a subject at a heat, need not be surprised, under all the circumstances of the case, that serious matter was suspected to be hid under the mysterious notification, and awful initials of the advertisement.

The president, turning over a newspaper that lay before him, observed, "That there was an answer to the advertisement, which it might be proper to read to the board."

"Give it to me!" cried Pen;—"do give it to me; for heaven's sake let me see it, sir!—My all!—my life, may be at stake!"

"Very probably," observed the lawyer coolly, and noting down the expression of the prisoner's countenance;—"it may be read to you."

"Oh, sir!" returned Pen, in the utmost agitation, "let it not be profaned by being publicly read; it is from a female—a!"

"You must not interrupt business, Mr Owen," observed the president; "if Mr Attorney thinks it may be read!"

"Surely, my lord," answered the barrister, "it may be read with the strictest propriety."

"The strictest propriety!" exclaimed Pen;—"what must be your notions of propriety in submitting the delicate and reserved communication of a woman to the observations of a court?"

"This is no court, sir!" observed a member; "and your present agitation must be accounted for on some other grounds than mere tenderness on the score of female delicacy, since, you will recollect, the paper is by this time in the hands of half the town."

"Let me hear it, then, if I must not see it; read it!—read it!—but keep me no longer in suspense."

"Mr Secretary, you may read it," said the barrister.

It ran in these words :—

"E. C. cannot meet P. O.—All communication is cut off.—P. O. has defeated his own purpose.—The worst has happened, and he must hasten to G. G. C. H. P., or be for ever"—

"This, sir," said the lawyer, addressing Pen, "does not appear to be of a nature to give offence to the delicacy of a lady."

"I don't understand it," exclaimed Pen.

"That is, you will not explain it?"

"I cannot, on my soul!"—which was very true, for he had not sufficiently recollected the directions given in the anonymous communication he had received, to perceive the correspondence of the initials with the address to his Portsmouth patron.

"We may proceed, I believe," observed the president—to which a bow of assent being returned by the barrister, the examination went on.

Mrs Grub proved his having slept from his lodgings on the Monday night; and gave a detailed account of the arrival of an old woman in the morning to fetch his clothes.—He was then asked where he had slept on that night?

"At Mrs Weston's!"

"And where does Mrs Weston live?"

"Near Smithfield."

"What is the name of the street?"

"It is a court or alley."

"Its name?"

"I know not—I never heard it."

"Who is Mrs Weston?"

"I know but little of her; but that little I must be excused from stating."

"You refuse to answer that question?"

"Most positively."

"Well, then, sir, will you acquaint us with the reason—the motive you had, for sleeping at Mrs Weston's, instead of your own lodgings?—Are we to presume the lady is no better than she should be?" asked the lawyer.

"She!—she is the purest and most benevolent of beings."

"Humph!—You knew her before the evening on which you slept there!"

"I did."

"Where did you know her?"

"In Newgate!"

"An unfortunate coincidence, Mr Owen;"—whose cause, indeed, appeared to grow worse and worse as it proceeded.

"May we ask," demanded the president, "how you employed

yourself during the evening after you left Mrs Grub's lodgings?"

"I was robbed, and nearly murdered, as I passed through Smithfield."

"So!—you appear to have recovered rapidly; for we have reason to believe, you were occupied in some active measures in the course of that very evening."

"I have nothing to conceal. I was carried, through the benevolent kindness of a Lincolnshire grazier, to a public-house; in return for which act of mercy, he was himself plundered of his property!"

"Do you speak from compunction, Mr Owen?" asked the lawyer.

"I don't understand your question."

"Do you know how he lost his property?"

"To be sure I do!—a swindling scoundrel who entered into conversation with us, contrived to pick his pocket."

"And then you retired to Mrs Weston's—to bed!"

"No such thing!—I knew not where she lived; for her address was in the pocket-book of which I was rifled."

"Then you found her out by instinct," said the lawyer; who, it will be perceived, began to lose much of that delicacy, which, from the apprehension of some mistake in identifying the prisoner—had before marked his interrogatories.

"If not by intuition, by something very like it;—it certainly was by no exercise of my own discretion, or by election."

"This is singular; pray, may we ask how you were thus spirited into her spells, as it were?"

"I sought shelter at her window, to save my life."

"You said just now, I believe, that your life was saved by a Lincolnshire grazier. This is not Mrs Weston, we are to presume."

Pen, who quickly perceived the change of tone which had taken place in the mode of examination, was not in a humour to bear raillery; and immediately answered, "Pursue your duty, sir, but beware of implying any thing against the honour of an Owen. I never was guilty of falsehood or prevarication in my life—nor shall any man, with impunity, screened, as he may suppose himself to be, under the trappings of office, or dressed in a little brief authority—dare to tamper with a character, which, with all my frailties, follies, and excesses, I have, and ever will, preserve—spotless."

"The lawyer was really surprised, and almost abashed; but gently observing that it was not usual to depend upon evidence to character, from a prisoner under his circumstances, he avoided

any further reflections, which did not immediately arise out of the regular course of the proceedings.

"As you are offended, Mr Owen, at our suspicions," observed the president, "perhaps you will not object to do them away by a statement of facts."

"I can have no objection;" and he then proceeded to state what had occurred at the Blue Posts; the new acquaintance he made there; and his motives for attending the secret committee of reformers.

"You approved the sentiments you heard there, it is to be presumed?" was the next question.

"Approved!—I abhorred them."

"It appears—though not in immediate evidence, and you are not called upon to commit yourself—that you have long professed opinions hostile to the present form and constitution of the Commons House of Parliament."

"Far from it; I was that very night the advocate for it."

"You spoke then—in this reform committee?"

"I would have spoken had I dared."

"As you did not, how did you appear to be the advocate for the existing system?"

"It was before I visited the committee."

"Who then was your opponent in this discussion?"

"I know not his name."

"How is that?"

"I did not ask it."

"Then you were led like a lamb to the slaughter-house," cried the lawyer, who now thought he perceived rank equivocation.

"It was, indeed, near being made a slaughter-house; but I did not anticipate the scene when I entered."

"Probably not. Then with your unknown friend"——

"He was no friend of mine."

"Then with this accidental acquaintance, you became the silent auditor of digested treason, and projected assassination?"

"What could I do?" exclaimed Pen; "I might have fallen a sacrifice as well as the poor devil who conducted me. I was resolved to do all that could be done."

"And what was that?"

"To have revealed the whole to government."

"Indeed! Then how happened it, that you, at the risk of your life, fled from the officers of justice, when by your surrender you might have been secure?"

"Secure! the name I had assumed was, by some fatality, known to these people, and the moment of my detection was nearly the crisis of my fate. Several balls passed over my head,

and fell near me, even as I lay stunned by my fall, on the roof of a house."

"Oh, you fell upon the roof a house?"

"I did."

"And fled to it again for succour?"

"I did not."

"How!—Produce those articles." The great-coat, bloody handkerchief, cravat, and hat, which the woman at Mrs Weston's had placed about the garret window, were now brought forward. Pen stared, and his surprise was taken as an evidence of guilt.

"Do you know these articles, Mr Owen?"

"I do; they were mine; they formed my disguise."

"Candidly avowed, however."

"Candidly! do you suppose, sir, I would stoop to deception?"

"Humph!" was repeated in more instances than one.

"Where did you leave those articles?"

Pen at the moment recollected all the circumstances of the case, and, in spite of his own tortured feelings, and his irksome situation, he could not restrain a smile, observing "that he recollected the circumstance perfectly; that a good-natured old woman had carried up those articles to mislead the officers; whilst he was quietly in bed, personating the sick daughter of of his kind hostess."

"Mrs Weston?" asked the lawyer.

"For heaven's sake," resumed Pen, every trace of laughter, being quickly banished; "for heaven's sake, let not that good woman suffer, for her charitable and humane contrivance."

"Oh, by no means, Mr Owen; you should, however, have weighed that consideration, before you had so exposed her, by your unseasonable mirth."

"Heaven have mercy on me!" cried Pen, devoutly turning his eyes upwards. "Never was mirth more strange to me than at this moment."

"You are then disposed to turn evidence," demanded the lawyer, "and to expose the proceedings of this radical meeting?"

"I don't exactly understand your phrase; I am not only disposed, but when I can clear my mind from the terrible anxiety, which tears it piecemeal at this moment, I am most desirous that government should be put in possession of information so important."

"You are aware, Mr Owen, that as you will stand committed for the crime of murder, which we do not meddle with at present, your evidence cannot be received to your own benefit."

"My own benefit! On my soul, sir, you seem to be as little

acquainted with the workings of an honourable mind, as with those which influence mine at the present moment. Benefit! Do you imagine the services of Pen Owen are to be purchased? No, no, you are all in an error. If you, gentlemen, have no cognizance of the murder, as you are pleased, indeed as you are justified in calling it, you can have no further business with me. I never denied my crime, and am ready to stand my trial before God, and my country; and would to heaven I stood as fair a chance of acquittal from the one as from the other! I may recover tranquillity, but never the peace of mind I have enjoyed: the image will haunt me—**HOLD—GRACIOUS GOD!** what is **THAT?**—Who are you?—**Speak!**” screamed Pen, starting back several paces from the board.

The assembly conceived that he had been seized with a sudden paroxysm of madness, a tendency to which they had long suspected. They rose hastily from their chairs, and called upon the officers in waiting to secure the prisoner. Pen, however, threw them off with the strength of a giant, and gazing upon a person who had just seated himself in the chair, hitherto left vacant, on the side of the president, again called out in a tremulous, but loud voice, “**Speak—in mercy speak—is it a living being—or**”——

The adjured spirit rose from his seat, and, with scarcely less agitation, strained forward its eyes with a look of enquiry. “**Good heavens, Mr Pen Owen!**” it exclaimed; “**what brings you into this situation?**”

“**Does it speak?**” exclaimed Pen. “**Let me hear that sound again, in mercy—Lord Killcullane!**”

“**My good sir,**” cried his lordship, coming round the table, and approaching Pen, “**what is the meaning of this strange scene?**”

“**The meaning!** *You* only, my lord, can explain it,” rushing towards him, whilst the officers attempted to hold him back. “**I thought myself your murderer;—was told you had fallen a sacrifice to my rashness and temerity;—that I had the blood of a fellow creature, and the curses of a childless father, to pursue me to the grave!**”—Pen could say no more.—He sunk into the arms of those who were set to guard him.

He was placed in a chair. The scenes in which he had been involved—the agitations he had undergone—the bodily sufferings he had endured, had reduced him to so weak a state, that the reflux of feeling from a quarter so unexpected, had literally deprived him of sense.

Whilst he lay in this condition, a confusion and tumult upon the staircase attracted the attention of the greater part of the company; whilst others were seeking from Lord Killcullane an

explanation of the extraordinary scene, in which he appeared to bear so distinguished a part. This was shortly given; and intelligence was conveyed to the council, that the *real* JOHN BROWN, who had been concerned in a radical riot, and had shot a constable, was in safe custody.

Our hero was gently supported into an adjoining room, where the kindest attention was paid to his situation: and the evident torture of his mind awakened a sympathy, which even the former suspicion of his guilt had not entirely been able to subdue.

It appeared that the shot received by Lord Killeullane had occasioned merely a flesh wound; but that, having grazed upon some artery, it caused an alarming flow of blood, which, being stopped, allowed the surgeon leisure to examine, and to ascertain that a few days would remedy the slight evil that had been incurred.

His lordship, who had been much struck with the spirit and subsequent humanity of Pen Owen, was desirous that he should be immediately informed of the state of affairs; and the good-humoured duellist, O'Donnell, had gone in person to his lodgings in Bury Street, on the afternoon of the meeting, in order to convey this agreeable intelligence.

How it happened that this account never reached the ears of our hero, remains to be accounted for; but that Wettenhall should have been induced to believe that his lordship was actually dead—was more than Pen could understand.

Having, in some measure, recovered from the attack, which so sudden a change in his circumstances had naturally occasioned, Pen was informed of all these particulars by his lordship, who stood self-condemned for having suffered himself to be detained from the duties of his office, (being connected with the home department,) when he might otherwise have saved his former opponent from the severe trial to which his feelings and delicacy had been subjected.

Pen most warmly expressed all he felt upon the occasion; but briefly stating the situation in which he had left the woman of his heart, Lord Killeullane sent for the officer, to whose custody our hero had been entrusted *en chef*, and, desiring him to give Mr Owen every aid in his power, the active agent of justice professed himself as willing now to afford assistance, as he had shown himself determined to withhold it before, adding, "I believe I can help your honour to a shorter way nor you expected; for the coach—seeing I always takes the number in the way of business, when any thing's stirring—is just comed upon the stand opposite, which carried off the fare, as the gemman was so eager ater."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Pen, "can you secure him?—Run."

"Nay, master, for the matter o' that, I ha' him under my thumb; I left him below in charge of my comrade—for, says I, as the gemman above stairs is likely to turn out another guess sort of person, from what we took him for, we may as well see ater those as he wished to lay hold on."

Pen shook Lord Killcullane warmly by the hand, and promised to wait upon him when his mind was more at ease, to express the obligations he owed to him; then seizing the officer by the arm, he hurried him down stairs into the waiting-room, which he had left with such opposite feelings, to examine the hackney coachman, who, his guide informed him, was there waiting his further orders.—Pen immediately accosted the man, and telling him that all prevarication was useless—which assurance was repeated upon the much higher authority of Pen's companion—honest Jarvey did not hesitate to give the fullest information in his power.

"He had been taken from a stand," he said, "in Holborn, by a person who appeared to be a gentleman's servant out of livery—who, putting a couple of one-pound notes into his hand, asked him if he had a mind for a good job, and a little risk, to which he assented, in consideration of the same sum being promised if the said job was executed with dexterity and success. He was then taken to a street in the neighbourhood of Smithfield, and ordered to wait till a gentleman and lady should arrive—that the moment they were in his coach, he was to drive off as fast as possible, through the turnpike leading to Islington, without paying attention to any other orders, or waiting for any further direction." He went on to say, that, after waiting about a quarter of an hour, he saw a very beautiful young lady, accompanied by a gentleman, wrapt up in a large military cloak—

"The major identified!" exclaimed Pen. "Did the lady appear to accompany him willingly?"

"She did, as far as I could judge," answered the man, "'till the steps of the coach vas let down, and the gemman, holding her fast by the hand, jumped in, and tried to pull her ater him; then she seemed woundy fritted, and declared she wouldn't enter—asked what vas meant—and was all obstropolous, 'till the man as first hired me comed behind her, and by main force pushed her in, and slammed to the door, which was my signal to be off. Then comes you, sir, or some one deucedly like you, and strikes at the young fellow, and brings him to the ground. Then I seed your honour nabbed in turn, by a set of—I mean some of these gemman here, who had been upon the look-out some time, and who, as I began to expect, were waiting for my fare; so I was glad to be off; and by the time I had reached the turnpike,

the gemman's gemman, as I call him, had got up vith us, and jumped upon the box."

"Well, well," interrupted Pen impatiently; "but where—where did you set down your fare?"

"That I can hardly tell, your honour."

"No prevarication, sirrah."

"La no, your honour, its no varication; but I can drive to the spot in the dark, if that be all."

"Off then," cried Pen, darting towards the door, where his property having been delivered up to him by order of the council, he seized his pistols, and accompanied by his friend, the Bow Street runner, jumped into the hackney coach, and bade the man drive on with his utmost speed.

When the party had arrived on the outskirts of the town, the coachman whipped his horses up the hill towards Islington; but when he had reached the top he stopped. Pen thrust his head out of the window to demand the reason.

"Why, marster," replied the man, scratching his head, "I com'd to it the other woy, and it's puzzled me, some how."

"Curse your stupidity, cannot you"——

"Oh! I sees now, your honour, yon's the split crow at the corner;" and immediately he set his miserable hacks into what was intended for their full speed, and, turning abruptly to the left, he passed along a row of new but unoccupied houses. At the further end stood one, insulated from the rest, which had the appearance of being inhabited. The man drove up to the door, and Pen and his companion were on the steps of the house before the triple-coated charioteer had descended from his elevation to aid them.

They knocked, but no one answered—they rung—they hallooed—they listened—they heard enough, though but little, to convince them that living beings were within. Pen placed his ear at the keyhole—he distinguished more—there was a bustle—a struggle—a faint scream. This was sufficient. He assailed the outworks, whilst his active companion ran down the area steps. The fortress seemed to bid defiance to a *coup de main*. A regular siege was not among our hero's calculations for the conduct of the campaign. Seeking for some instrument with which to break open the door, his new ally *doubted* whether they could make forcible entry without a warrant.

"A warrant!!" absolutely roared our hero, "when Ellice Craig is on one side, and I on the other!" So saying, and taking the whole responsibility upon himself, he summoned to his aid three pair of broad shoulders united under his immediate command, and giving the word, applied their compacted force like a battering ram against the door, which, on the first

shock, was freed from all the ingenious mechanism of locks, bars, and bolts, with which it had been secured within.

No sooner had our hero made good his lodgment within the works, than running into the several apartments at hand, he called upon his lieutenant to take a central station in the hail, in order to prevent either ingress or egress; but more accustomed to this sort of business than his general, the second in command advised him to be cautious, as they did not yet know the number of the enemy; and added that it would be wise to ascend together, as the very silence which prevailed above augured an ambushade.

Pen was in too much haste, and too violently agitated, to be very pertinacious in the article of military obedience. The coachman was desired to guard the entrance, whilst Pen and the officer, finding nothing in the lower regions, ascended to the first floor. Here all was equally deserted, though every corner, and every closet capable of concealing an enemy, was visited and ransacked.

"Hark!" cried the officer, "there's something stirring above," and the creaking of a man's shoes was distinctly heard overhead. Up rushed Pen—the front attic was open, but the door of the back room was closed. A smothered scream was heard, but scarcely heard, before the door itself was shivered into a thousand pieces, and a man, who was forcing a handkerchief into the mouth of the almost fainting Ellice Craig, was, by the same effort, stretched on the floor.

"Ellice—my long-lost Ellice! have I found thee—and found thee thus?" falling exhausted at her feet, and embracing her knees. She fell back in a swoon; but not before she had uttered a scream—certainly not of terror—on beholding Pen Owen.

He motioned to the officer to retire, but desired him to wait on the outside of the door, to prevent any sudden attack.

The old soldier, however, first secured the ruffian our hero had struck down, who proved to be the man who had already, in the morning, felt the weight of his vengeance. He was given into the safe custody of the coachman, who was summoned to bind his arms with a bell-rope supplied from the adjoining room.

All Pen's efforts were now directed towards the recovery of his Ellice, upon whose beloved countenance—so constantly present to his imagination—so long withholden from his eyes—his whole soul seemed riveted.

On a table were water and hartshorn, to which it had evidently been necessary to have recourse before, and to these he immediately resorted.

Ellice slowly recovered; and her first symptom of reviving

sensation, was an exclamation of joy and surprise, at seeing her early friend and lover so near her. As she revived, on a more clear perception of her situation, however, she appeared to reproach herself for giving way to this first impulse, and gently pushing him from her, sobbed out, "Is it possible *you* can be concerned in this vile stratagem, Pen Owen?"

"Me!" exclaimed the tortured lover. "You see in me, my adored Ellice, your deliverer—your Pen—your own Pen—ready to lay down his life, ay, ten thousand lives, for"——

"For Rose Weston!" cried she, interrupting him with a look of mixed horror and contempt. "Go—go—it is profanation." At this moment a violent noise broke in upon her reproaches.

Pen heard it not. He stood stupefied, waiting for the conclusion of her speech. He could scarcely believe he was awake, or that he was not a slave to some infernal illusion.

The wheels of a carriage, and a confused shout, had first arrested the alarmed attention of Ellice. A contest was evidently carrying on below—voices and struggling bodies were heard ascending the stairs together. Ellice screamed—she ran into the arms of Pen—she pushed him away from her at the same moment. He seemed neither to regard *her* nor the approaching uproar.

She cried aloud, "Oh, Pen Owen, Pen Owen! if you are not indeed lost to all shame, save me, save me, at least from the hands of a villain—protect your poor Ellice from being a victim"——

Pen caught her half dead in one arm, whilst with the other he seized and cocked one of his pistols. The door shook upon its hinges. Voices, persons, still contended for mastery.

"Enter!" exclaimed Pen.

"Ah, no!" screamed Ellice; "let me not see the wretch again!"

"Enter!" repeated Pen, struggling to keep her back, and out of the line of his threatened vengeance; "enter—and your first step over the threshold is death."

The door gave way—Major Irwin, exclaiming "Villain!" rushed forward. Pen fired—the major staggered over the proscribed threshold into the room.

"God of Heaven!" screeched the maddened Ellice—"my father!!" and fell lifeless across the body of the major!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE reader may perhaps conceive that he has had quite enough of our hero, and that a being so wholly given up to the tyranny of his passions is neither an agreeable object of contemplation, nor one likely to afford a very wholesome lesson to "the young folks." I beg leave, however, to observe, that I am one of those who never desert a friend in the hour of need. At the same time, as the Spartans were wont to expose their drunken helots, so do I hold up even this, my best friend, when he is out of his sober senses, not as an example, but as a warning to the afore-said "young folks." Nevertheless, if they suppose he is revelling and triumphing in the successful vengeance inflicted upon his long-sought enemy, they have learned little of our hero's character in the progress of his history. If they infer that such a wild and desperate act, especially after his late "hair-breadth 'scapes," calls for some exemplary punishment, I answer, that, like another renowned hero, Pen sober was a frequent appellant from Pen drunk—that he was a Christian—and, although he sometimes might forget it, that he had that within him which he had never laboured to silence, and could inflict a pang, "like iron piercing to the soul," which the grand inquisitor himself might torture his own ingenuity in vain to outdo in the mortification of the body.

To this, then, I may fairly leave him, as amply sufficient for poetical justice. The law must do the rest; and should he eventually be found guilty by a jury of his peers, (if twelve such men can be collected within the bills of mortality,) I shall of course consider it to be my duty to attend in person, and to furnish my readers, not only with his trial in detail, but with the whole of his character and behaviour, (his life they will already have had,) "dying speech and confession, as is usual upon such occasions."

His public exit, if so interesting an incident be granted us, may be wrought up with effect for our closing scene. "*Finis coronat opus.*" By the by, my bookseller suggests that *finis* should be spelt *funis*; but I do not believe there is any authority for this orthographical innovation; and, between *you* and *I*, the change would be for the worse. It is only the difference between our own end and a rope's end, although the fate of our hero may *depend* upon it. Further than a graphic description of his execution, I do not pledge myself. His body, it is true, if his sentence be carried into full effect, will not be left to his friends for "decent interment," but be delivered over to the surgeons

for dissection. This will be the business of the reviewers, and they, no doubt, will perform the task, *con amore*.

These interesting points being adjusted, we may as well return to our long-neglected friends at Oldysleigh, and unravel and explain (a most irksome and unpleasant part of duty, although, I am fearful, a very necessary one for the benefit of my readers) all that may be necessary to render the late melancholy catastrophe intelligible to those whose powers of perception have not already penetrated it.

We left them, the reader will recollect, calmly, but anxiously, awaiting events, to unfold to them the fate of their beloved Ellice, which, owing to a chain of circumstantial evidence, or rather of strange coincidences, they no longer doubted was linked in some way or other with that of Pen Owen.

Of the whole party, Sir Luke Oldysworth was the soonest reconciled to the existing state of things. He was every day more pleased with the conduct and character of his adopted heir, whose popularity among the tenantry bore as strong a testimony to his humanity and goodness of heart, as his indefatigable exertions to bring back peace to the bosom of an unhappy family, and to screen Pen Owen, whose demeanour towards himself, it was universally admitted, had been wantonly offensive, from as much of the obloquy that had fallen upon him as possible.

Poor uncle Caleb was restless and unhappy, not more from the disappointment he experienced in the failure of his hopes respecting his nephew Pen, than from having the regularity of his habits, and the source of daily comfort his society had so long afforded him, thus broken up. He frequently expressed his determination of going up to London, for the purpose of bringing the boy to a sense of his duty—fully convinced, as he maintained, that, “if he saw his old uncle’s face, he would turn his back upon all the wicked people who had decoyed him away.” He no longer entertained a doubt that his nephew had married Ellice Craig; and, in his simplicity, gave no little offence to the feelings of Mrs Mapletoft, by the reflection that “poor Pen might have done better,” though, he must say, she was a good girl before he married her.

The letter, however, which our hero dispatched from Newgate, gave the poor old man a shock his store of philosophy was not competent to bear; and he submitted, with a sort of awful resignation, to the fate which he now considered inevitable. “He was resolved to see the poor boy before he died, (for he felt it decreed he should be hanged,) or to throw himself at the feet of the king, to have mercy on his grey hairs, and save the heir of all the Owens from an ignominious death.”

It was long before the good sense and mild reasoning of

Mapletoft could reassure him upon a subject which had nearly reduced him to despair.

The vicar had undertaken to answer the letter; and we may recollect the effect produced upon the unfortunate *detenu* on receiving it. It was not surprising that the Mapletofts, who, partaking of the common error, supposed Ellice Craig to be the partner of his punishment, if not of his excesses, should have felt strongly and indignantly upon such an occasion. A short time, indeed, revealed the real state of the case, as far as the cause of Pen's imprisonment was concerned; but his determined and persevering silence, although imposed by their own orders, in some degree convinced them they had little to hope from his repentance, or from a return to a sense of duty.

It may, however, be a matter of some surprise to the reader, that this gentleman, who had been the early friend and instructor of the boy, and had admitted him to his heart, from the acknowledged sweetness of his disposition, and the natural integrity of his mind, should have given him up at once, and supposed, without more direct evidence, that he had, in so short a commerce with the world, become the very reverse of that he promised to be, and a mere vagabond, without principle or compunction. Appearances, to be sure, were strong against him. Circumstantially he had been proved guilty of attempting the life of Sir Luke's heir, merely because he stood in the way of an imprudent and unauthorized passion, and no less so of a rude trespass upon the laws of duty and hospitality, in regard to his early friend and instructor, by tearing away, from her closest ties, the child of his adoption.

Still it may be said that, with a parental and friendly indulgence towards acts which, if they could not be justified, might still be palliated, it was natural that Mr Mapletoft, who knew the structure of the mind he had early laboured to form, should make many allowances, and trust to nature for redeeming the errors into which inexperience might have led him. But it is to be remembered that this gentleman had long deplored and deprecated the desultory plan of education which his inconsistent and unsteady parent had followed after Pen had been withdrawn from his superintendence. He foresaw the consequence of the long intervals between the abandonment of one capricious plan and the adoption of a new one, when the mind was left to run riot, without any fixed rule, and the imagination to wander over objects, good or bad, as they floated on the surface of society, where accident, or a combination of circumstances, had thrown him. He had perceived the passions untrained to discipline, and volatile as the vapour, which could in an instant inflame them, betraying themselves in every tone, gesture, and look of his former pupil.

He laboured, during his short residence at Oldysleigh, after his father had ceased his experiments upon education, to restrain the hourly ebullitions into which his feelings were accustomed to hurry him, and foresaw that some check more powerful than a mere knowledge, or even abhorrence of what was wrong, was necessary to prevent the young man from being hurried into errors and crimes, likely not only to colour his own destiny, but involve the happiness of all who were connected with him.

We have seen him frequently interposing such a check, when the impetuosity of our hero's feelings were about to lead him astray; and although he found the task pregnant with difficulty, and almost hopeless, his affection for the youth himself, and his veneration for the amiable and inoffensive uncle, Caleb, determined him to persevere, and to rescue, if possible, the over-confident boy from the tyranny of his passions.

With these sentiments, (whether altogether founded or not, is no longer a question,) it was very natural that the accounts, however exaggerated, of Pen's irregularities in scenes of metropolitan dissipation and depravity, which reached his ears, added to the full conviction, be it recollected, of a dishonourable act towards himself and his family, should have fixed his opinions respecting the unfortunate young man, and that despair of success should have prevented his taking more active measures for the recovery of the stray sheep. He felt assured that nothing but the penalty of vice could have the effect of redeeming him, and that in the school of adversity alone, was there a chance of reading his own follies to advantage.

Like many very wise men, I am induced to believe Mr Mapletoft erred nearly as much, on the side of sober calculation, as our hero did from the want of it, on the other. There is an idiosyncrasy in the moral, as well as physical constitution, which baffles all regular practice. Pen's feelings, however strong, had a direct bias towards virtue; and an appeal to his gratitude—to his affection—would, in a moment, have acted as a sedative upon any tendency to excess or error. Mr Mapletoft did not prescribe this remedy; and all that can be said is, that philosophers as well as physicians are sometimes out in their prognostics and diagnostics, and must occasionally have to console themselves for the loss of a patient, by the conscientious conviction of having treated his case—*secundum artem*.

Frank Wettenhall had more than once visited London, for the sole purpose of collecting information respecting the fugitives, without having it in his power to convey any thing very satisfactory to the party at Oldysleigh. He had with difficulty traced Pen, as he informed them, after he had left his first lodgings; and, subsequent to his imprisonment in Newgate, he had never

been able to gain sight of him, until the morning on which he encountered him in the street, and became a party in the battle royal which ensued.

In relating such facts as came within his observation, he was rather drawn into the details by a particular mode of cross-examination, a specimen of which we have witnessed upon a former occasion, on the part of Mr Mapletoft, than as professed evidence against our hero. He did not deny positive facts, but his great object appeared to be, to dwell rather on the *strength* of the temptation, than the *weakness* which submitted to it. His friends could not fail to perceive this, and estimated his character accordingly, with the exception of poor uncle Caleb.

With all the good man's philanthropy, with all his notions of justice, and with all his innocent credulity, he could never be brought to believe, that, somehow or other, the young heir did not stand in the light of his nephew; and though little disposed to make unnecessary reflections, he contrived, at least once in seven days, to break in upon the general eulogium bestowed on the heir of Sir Luke, with a groan, and an observation tacked to it, "that he was nothing to poor Pen, if poor Pen hadn't fallen among the Philistines."

One day as Mr and Mrs Mapletoft were sitting in the parsonage study, talking over the subject ever uppermost in their thoughts, and framing some probable issue of events which still appeared to be involved in so much mystery, a carriage drove up to the door, and, to their very great surprise, Major Irwin was announced. He appeared to be considerably agitated; but quickly recovering himself, very politely apologized for having so long delayed to return the visit, with which Mr Mapletoft had honoured him, on his first coming into the neighbourhood.

"When my reasons are made known to you, Mr and Mrs Mapletoft, I trust I shall stand acquitted, at least of any slight, or"——

He hesitated for a word; and Mrs Mapletoft availed herself of the pause to observe, rather haughtily for her, "that it was far from the wish of Mr Mapletoft or herself, to intrude their society where it was not courted."

"Courtéd, madam!" answered the major; "if there is a being on earth whom I would court—worship—follow with my vows of gratitude to the world's end, you are that being."

Mapletoft absolutely lay back in his chair with astonishment, whilst his wife rose from hers, both simultaneously struck with the common report of the black major being deranged in his intellects.

"Major Irwin," said Mr Mapletoft, with great solemnity, "I fear you have mistaken—have"——

"No, sir, answered the major, with increasing vivacity, which by no means tended to diminish the apprehension of his host and hostess; "no, sir, I am mistaken in nothing, if this Mrs Mapletoft is the preserver—the mother of Ellice Craig."

"Of whom! of Ellice did you say, Major Irwin?" cried Mrs Mapletoft, "what—what—do you know any thing of her?"

"Be patient, my dear madam, and you shall hear all," returned the major, who found it necessary to resume his own calmness, in order to meet the increasing agitation of the opposite party; "I request your attention to what I am about to say, and, if possible, your forbearance."

"Forbearance!" exclaimed the agitated lady, "what is coming?"—

"Nay, nay," said Mapletoft, interrupting her, with a countenance, however, little less ruffled by anxiety; "we must listen, in order to learn."

"Indeed," continued the major, "I feel myself awkwardly placed in being compelled to break my intelligence by degrees; if I could open the whole like a picture at once before you, I might hope"—

"Gracious heaven! sir," exclaimed Mrs Mapletoft again, anxious to be told a tale which, from the exordium, she yet dreaded to hear, is your intelligence"—

"It is, I trust, of the most soothing nature; yet"—

"Yet what, Major Irwin?" cried the vicar; "you torture us, sir."

"Well then," returned the major, "I will go straight forward; and first, in me, you behold the wretch you have been taught to abhor—the ravisher of your Ellice Craig."

"What!" screamed Mrs Mapletoft, who with her husband had started from their respective seats, "you! you the lover!"—

There is no saying what personal reflections were rising to the lady's lips, upon the sudden conviction of her village Venus having shared the connubial fate of her great archetype, had not Mr Mapletoft, in a voice that seemed intended to suppress every other, demanded an immediate explanation.

The major smiled, and the smile gave great offence:—observing "that it was for the purpose of explanation that he had waited upon the worthy pastor and his wife, and that, had he not been interrupted, the painful duty would have sooner been performed." Requesting the host and hostess again to be seated, he continued,

"I have indeed robbed you, my good neighbours, and allow me to say, my best friends," (here Mrs Mapletoft was, with difficulty, pressed down into her chair by her husband,) "of a treasure, which you only, if I may be allowed to except myself,

knew duly how to appreciate ; but still, when you know my claims, the sacred claims by which I hold her"— This was not to be borne.

"Then you have married her—forced her to the odious"—

"Pray, pray, madam, allow me to finish one sentence, and then your comments must take their course. I did not think that I should have had to encounter such suspicions as you seem to harbour. I have not, I apprehend, much the appearance of a marrying man," said the major, again smiling. The smile was insult !

"Confusion, sir !" exclaimed the vicar, starting on his legs, who, with his good woman, formed on this occasion no unapt resemblance to a Dutch barometer, where the man pops out as the wife pops in, according to the temperature of the atmosphere—"confusion, sir!—do you come to glory in your villany, and to insult us with"—

"I did hope, sir," cried the major, rising also, and putting back his chair with calm dignity, "that a Christian minister would at least have heard even an offender before he ventured to condemn him—a lady's feelings may overpower her, and she may, in the tenderness of her nature, forget to proportion the penalty to the crime ; but before you, sir, ventured upon an expression which no man has ever yet dared, or felt a temptation even, to apply to my character, you should have recollected that Christian 'charity hopeth all things.' I would not invade your province, Mr Mapletoft ; but you have put me to a severe trial—in my own"—

The vicar stood more than abashed by this reproof ; he was self-condemned ; he felt that a guilty man could not have had such an advantage over him.

"I am wrong, Major Irwin," said he, "very wrong. I beg your pardon."

"You have it, sir," cried the major resuming his seat ; "I am wrong too ; but my narrative is of a nature that puzzles all my ingenuity to find the point at which I ought first to set out. In short, you will be surprised—shocked perhaps—when I discover to you that I am the father of the angel being who owes her life—her virtues—her all to you—best and kindest of"—

Here, had not his own tears checked his speech, the exclamations of surprise, of mixed, and almost agonized feelings of Mrs Mapletoft, would have interrupted him ; for, with a slight hysteric scream which her attempt to speak had brought on, she lost her recollection, and fell into the arms of her husband, who, on his part, was so thunderstruck with what he had just heard, that he had nearly let her fall on the floor.

Every thing was done that is usual on such occasions ; and

the first storm of feeling being blown over, and the rapid evolutions of the brain—which as rapidly arrange every thing in order for the reception of a new train of association as they displace the old ones—Major Irwin was seated as an old friend between the vicar and his wife, who admitted to herself, that he was neither so old nor ugly as she had before thought him, and that his voice was certainly one of the sweetest she had ever heard. His story was not a very long, though an eventful one.

"It is unnecessary," he began, "to trouble you with the details of my early life, or of my family, further than by stating that the one is respectable, and the other marked, as usual, by the thousand-and-one scrapes into which youth and independence are hurried by the animal spirits and want of thought.

"Out of one of those, however, I found it more difficult to extricate myself than I had calculated; and my father taking offence, when I conceived myself to be the injured person, I determined to abide by my own judgment, and to punish the presumption of my parent, by showing I could do without him.

"I resolved to become a volunteer in the army just, at the period, about to embark, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, for Egypt. The idea was no sooner suggested to my mind, than measures were taken to carry it into effect. I applied to a friend of my father's in London, who, after representing the romantic madness of the plan—which tended the more strongly to recommend it to my adoption—advanced me a sum of money sufficient to equip me, and gave me a letter of introduction to an officer who had already left England, and was to have a command in the expedition. All this was very well; and experience might have had an opportunity of giving me a hearty whipping, and of sending me home a better boy than when I started; but alas! I was, I repeat, young and thoughtless, and romantic in every thing. I had united to my fortunes a sweet and amiable being, as thoughtless and romantic as myself, who entered into the plan with all the warmth and ardour of her giddy husband.

"She was permitted to embark with me for Malta, where the transports were to rendezvous; and, until we arrived off the coast of Africa, we laughed over our little wants, left care to the winds, and felt indifferent to the change of place or climate. The transport, however, in which we sailed, having been badly found, suffered so severely in a gale of wind soon after we had passed the straits, that she foundered, and, in spite of every precaution, went down. My beloved wife, myself, and seventeen other individuals, were all that escaped a watery grave, out of five hundred persons with whom we had embarked.

"We were saved by clinging to some wrecks of the vessel which were floating about; and when light dawned upon our

fate, we were happily discovered by another transport, which, being in too shattered a condition to keep up with the main fleet, had also nearly foundered in the storm. She lay to and received us on board; and our joy on seeing each other safe, was only alloyed by the recollection of the fate of so many of our shipmates.

“When we landed at Malta, we seemed not to have a care in the world. In fact, we had nothing in the world to care about, for the whole of our little dependence was gone—sunk in the merciless deep. What was to be done? The officer to whom my letter was addressed had, I found, left Malta several weeks before, in order to join Sir Sidney Smith in making preparations for the intended invasion of Egypt. To return to England was impracticable, without the means of purchasing a meal, and to wait for supplies from home, would require a period of abstinence and privation which living souls could not well endure. The only expedient that presented itself, was to enlist as a private soldier in the regiment in which it had been my intention to volunteer my services.

“I knew that I could, at my leisure, employ my interest at home in redeeming my liberty; and, when I opened my last resource, with a face somewhat more grave than usual, to the beloved sharer of my fate, she welcomed it as a most happy expedient; and we rather laughed at a misfortune which had the air of an adventure, than wept over it as a source of regret.

“There was no objection to my wife remaining with me, which I made a preliminary to my enlistment, and within two days after my landing in Malta, I entered the 26th regiment under an assumed name, to prevent any unnecessary exposure of my family. We sailed in the beginning of the year 1801 for Egypt, and arrived at Aboukir, in the face of the enemy. Oh, madam, when I reflect,” said the major, “on the horrors of that night and morning, and think what the sufferings and anxiety of my lost angel were, I may fairly date, at that early period of my life, the setting in of a storm which was to cloud every future hour of my existence.

“Just previous to our debarkation, I had attracted by some act of duty which I scarcely recollect, the attention of Lieutenant Ellice; and his kindness induced me—in the hope that, should any accident befall me, he would protect my unfortunate wife—to impart to him, in some measure, my situation, and the circumstances which had led to it. He promised to befriend me, and on the very eve of our landing, told me to behave well, and that he doubted not, on due representation of my case, a commission might be obtained from the commander-in-chief, who was the soldier’s friend and the patron of merit. Animated

by his kindness, and still buoyant with sanguine hopes of distinction, I rushed among the foremost into the boats which were to convey the troops, under the fire of the squadron, to the shore.

"I will confess, however, when the formidable resistance prepared by the French, presented itself in the inactive state in which we lay upon our oars for hours, it served much to cool that ardour, and to bring home to my mind reflections which ought sooner to have found a place there, when I recollected I had involved the fate of an innocent and helpless being, who expected to be confined in a few weeks.

"Her torture I could well understand on beholding me thus exposed to the incessant play of batteries extended along a line of coast for nearly three miles, all directed towards one point. But reflection was as racking as it was new; and, when the word was given to advance, I felt as if it were the signal of my safety and my glory. I was among the first to spring forward to reach the top of the sand-hills, and to aid in turning the cannon which had so long galled us, against the flying detachments of the enemy. But I grow tedious"—

"Far, far from it," cried Mrs Mapletoft;—"the scene is now before me. Poor young lady!"

"I was actively engaged in the glorious action of the 21st of March, before Alexandria; and ere the brave Abercrombie fell, I was left for dead upon the field of battle. I still retained some recollection; and call to mind, at this distance of time, the shock I felt on hearing the sound of my beloved wife, moaning over my body. How long I remained in this situation I know not; but when I came to my senses, I found myself in a strange place, and surrounded by men dressed in the habits of the east. A comrade, whom I knew by the regimental coat thrown over his mattress, lay near me; but I found myself incapable of uttering a word, or making an enquiry.

"For several weeks I remained in this state, receiving from the persons around me, every attention it was in their power to bestow upon me. I could obtain no intelligence of my real situation, until my comrade, whose wounds were slighter than mine, was able to discharge the office of nurse—which strangers had performed for him—to a countryman and fellow-sufferer. I found he was a corporal in the 26th, who knew me by sight; and from him I learned all that remained to be told of my sad and melancholy fate. My kind friend, Lieutenant Ellice, had, after the battle, found me dead, as he supposed: and, alas!—which more immediately attracted his benevolent attention—my poor, poor wife, lay insensible, and apparently dead beside me!"

Here the major could not suppress a flood of tears, to which,

from the recollection of her interest in the scene, Mrs Mapletoft paid a sympathizing tribute.

"Yes—he found youth—beauty—virtue, breathing out its last sigh upon her disfigured husband, having prematurely given birth to a daughter, whose cries even could not win her back to the world. But how was my horror, madam, augmented, when I heard that, a few days after, the brave Lieutenant Ellice had himself fallen in the action of the 23d, and that his widow had availed herself of a vessel carrying home despatches to take her voyage to England!"

"Alas!" observed Mrs Mapletoft, "you were too well informed. I left the country three days after I had consigned all that remained of the unfortunate Ellice to a soldier's grave."

"When I was sufficiently recovered," continued the major, "to crawl forth from the tent which had been my hospital, I laboured to seek further information respecting my poor wife, and the child so inauspiciously brought into the world: but the troops had been some time in advance towards Cairo, and my ignorance of the language of the country cut me off from any communication with the people around me. I learned from my wounded companion that he and myself had been found, the day after the engagement, by an old Scheik, whose family had been rescued from destruction by the active intrepidity of Sir Sidney Smith, previous to the arrival of the British troops; and that, perceiving some signs of life in us, he had been induced to repay that gallant officer's kindness on the heads of his suffering countrymen. He had us conveyed to his tents; and, being obliged to join the army, had left us to the care of his family, who had watched and attended us with the greatest humanity. I scarcely knew whether I ought to be grateful to this good man for restoring me to a life whose charm was now lost to me, or to regret a kindness so ill bestowed.

"But this was the peevish thought of a moment; and, if I could recover my child, I conceived I had something yet to live for. My wounds closed slowly, and I found that my features, which it is no longer vanity to say were once thought good, were changed and disfigured in a manner that rendered me for years an object almost of disgust. I do not mean to say," observed the major, smiling, "that they *even now* are of the Adonis cast"——

"I'm sure," said the good-natured Mrs Mapletoft, "there is nothing"——

"The less," continued the major, still smiling, "said, madam, upon that subject the better. Well, my good friends, not to tire you with details, I at length was enabled to proceed to Cairo just before the capitulation had been signed, and was

witness, from the caravansera in which I was lodged, to the most interesting sight of General Baird and his little army joining their countrymen from the opposite side of the globe, after having traversed the Theban desert for ten whole days.

“I was found incapable of joining my regiment ; and, indeed, I had no wish to prosecute my Quixotic plan further than was necessary to secure me from famine, and enable me to find a passage to Europe. I made every enquiry after my child, but could gain no satisfactory intelligence respecting it. I had no clue to the notion of Mr Ellice having adopted the infant, and only supposed he had given it to some soldier’s wife to nurse : but, after the strictest investigation among my old associates, I could find none that answered the description—none that could afford me the slightest information upon the subject.

In conversing one morning with an intelligent sergeant, who had come with the army from India, and whose accounts of their voyage, and subsequent difficulties, had arrested my attention, he mentioned incidentally the services of a Captain Irwin, whose knowledge of the country had enabled him to afford many useful suggestions during the expedition. I was struck with the name ; and, conceiving he might be a relation whom I remembered to have been early in life sent out to India, resolved, if upon enquiry I found this to be the case, to address myself to him, and obtain his assistance, if possible, to extricate me from the situation in which my fatal inconsiderateness had involved me, and to enable me to return to my friends in England.

“I proceeded to his quarters, and found my most sanguine hopes realized ; for I no sooner made myself known to him, than, espousing my interests, he insisted upon my immediately becoming one of his family, and lost not a day in procuring my discharge. He treated me as if I had been a son ; and his affectionate kindness so endeared him to me, that when General Baird was ordered back to India, he easily persuaded me to return with him, promising—what he felt secure of performing—to obtain for me a commission in his own regiment, in which several vacancies had occurred from the effects of the climate, and the privations to which the troops had been exposed in their perilous voyage, and march over the desert.

“Rumours of peace soon reached the country, and before the end of the year I received a commission in Captain Irwin’s company, and returned with him to India. There I continued for many years, having received no encouragement from my family to return home ; and fortune smiling upon my patron as well as myself, I had no reason to complain of a situation which afforded me every comfort and luxury of life, and would have constituted my happiness, could I have banished the recol-

lection of the past, and the regrets that the fatal effects of my supposed death had deprived me of a being who would indeed have given happiness and content to the rudest scene of the desert.

“Colonel Irwin—for he had now attained that rank—was a great favourite at headquarters; and whenever any measure of importance came under consideration, the governor-general never failed to call him to his councils. My interest he had perfectly identified with his own; and, being ready enough to redeem lost time under so wise and able a guide, I rose into favour with my protector and friend. But I will not dwell on scenes which lead me from my point, and must be uninteresting to you, my good friends.”

“By no means,” said Mr Mapletoft; “we are”——

“We are only,” cried the wife, “anxious to know how you discovered”——

“I thought so,” said the major, smiling; “and I will keep you no longer in suspense. Early in the last year I lost my friend and benefactor. He had been engaged up the country in a negotiation with one of the native powers, and, ardent as in his most boyish days, he wished to convey the intelligence of his success to his employers as expeditiously as possible. A fever was the consequence, and the termination of his honourable and valuable life followed. I dwell not on my feelings,” said the major, in a broken voice: “I had lost my only friend; but he was my friend, even when his heart ceased to beat; and from the grave his voice spake; for though a will was the last thing I should ever have thought of seeking, in the state of mind to which I was reduced, others were not so inattentive; and, upon examining his papers, it was discovered that, after leaving a few legacies among friends, and to some public institutions which he had fostered during his lifetime, he had bequeathed to me the bulk of his princely fortune.

“I felt his kindness, his more than parental love; but his wealth was useless to me: I had no ambition: I seemed to have no affection left for others. Love I had felt but once, and for a fleeting moment; but its memory faded not away. Friendship I had experienced but once, and he that inspired it was gone. My spirits, my mind was subdued; and in this state the effect of climate first seemed to operate upon my constitution. I was for several weeks in a state which appeared to baffle the skill of medicine. A favourable change took place, however, and new scenes opened upon me as I recovered.

“I was at length well enough to accept an invitation from the governor-general to dine at the government house. During the repast, the conversation, which arose out of some observations

upon the services and character of my late friend, turned upon the expedition to Egypt; in the course of which an officer, lately arrived from England, alluded to his having been the bearer of despatches home, after the battles in the neighbourhood of Alexandria. Without being aware of any particular object I had in view, I made some desultory observations upon the occurrences of that portion of the campaign in which I had suffered so much; but when he mentioned incidentally that he had taken charge of a most interesting widow and child of an officer killed in one of the actions, I felt a sort of electric spark shoot through my brain and heart. I could not stop to analyze the feeling, but, almost convulsed, demanded the officer's name. He mentioned Ellice. I had nearly forgotten it—I started—a confused hope had found its way to my heart, and conjured up the phantasm of a possibility that my wife might have been saved; but, alas! I remembered, at the same moment, that I had heard the sad details of her interment before I left the country.

"My faculties were benumbed, and I perceived nothing but the effect of the disappointment I had so weakly prepared for myself. The officer had paused on perceiving the agitation he had awakened, but soon afterwards asked, in a voice of sympathizing enquiry, if—if Lieutenant Ellice had been known to me. *Then*, for the first time, something like the truth flashed upon my mind. 'A child did you say, sir?' I demanded, with an air of wildness. He answered in the affirmative.

"I knew, madam, that you had no child. I felt it possible, probable, certain, that you had adopted my orphan. She might live—she might be deploring the loss of a father who had abandoned her—the thought was distraction.

"I rose abruptly from the table—complained of a relapse, hardly knowing what I did. I threw myself on my bed on my return to my house, fearing that the confusion of my thoughts might bring back all the evils from which I had so recently escaped. I had now, I thought, something to live for, at least to hope; and to a being who had nothing on earth for his affections to dwell on, this was joy. I fell upon my knees, and, appealing to Heaven for fortitude to uphold me under evil or prosperous fortune, found myself capable of reflecting, and setting about the execution of the measure, which, as it was the first, so was it the last and only suggestion of my imagination. To remain in suspense—to await enquiry was out of the question. The ships of the season were about to return to Europe, and my affairs were soon settled. A rich man has always influence enough to do, and to act as he wills. I issued my orders, and they were executed without delay or difficulty.

"In less than a week after the conversation at the governor's

table, I was settled in the cabin, whose doors were to open upon the shores of England before I again exchanged it for any other *human* habitation at least. I had obtained from General Merton"—

"I recollect him," cried Mrs Mapletoft; "he was then Captain Merton. Indeed! indeed! I am deeply indebted to him for attentions during the voyage, without which I must have sunk under my misfortunes."

"From him, madam," continued the major, "I received such particulars as tended to confirm my hopes. He told me that he had been quartered in the neighbourhood of Clifton a few years back, and been charmed with the beauty of a little girl, who, with its mother, was sitting in a landau, at a review or field day; that he was acting as inspecting field-officer, and having approached the carriage to remove some dragoons, who kept the ground, and seemed to impede her view, the attention was received with so grateful a smile by the child, that he could not avoid stopping to admire it—that whilst apologizing to the lady for his intrusion, he was struck with the conviction of having seen her before, and upon an explanation taking place, he had subsequently visited Mrs Ellice as Mrs Mapletoft, at a place called Oldysleigh, a few miles from Durdham Down.

"It appears, that he concluded the child to be yours," the major continued, "but I would not suffer him to urge any reasons for thinking so;—I had laid in my stock of hope for a long voyage, and when I compelled him to acknowledge that he had never directly asked the question, I declared him incompetent to decide upon it.

"Six weeks ago, I returned to my native land, and my first visit, I need not say, was to this neighbourhood. I made my enquiries with caution, and so apt are we to labour at deceiving ourselves, that I have often broken them off abruptly, when they seemed to tend to the dispersion of my hopes. The lodge upon the green was vacant; I purchased it without hesitation, and the taste of a Bristol builder—employed to repair it for my reception—has, I find, been attributed to my eastern notions of magnificence. The fact is, I had neither feelings nor taste to employ upon the subject—they were entirely absorbed in the vicarage, whither my steps were regularly directed, whenever darkness would admit of my watching without being observed.

"I could gain no direct intelligence; I found the child was called Ellice, or Miss Ellice, by the various cottagers among whom my enquiries were chiefly made; and although I, every day, resolved to ascertain my fate at once, by revealing myself to you, madam, and the worthy vicar, I as often postponed my

resolution, from the dread of having my hopes abruptly and irremediably crushed.

“It was in vain I endeavoured to throw myself in the way of the dear child, in order to trace her features; she was constantly accompanied either by yourself or young Owen, or Mr Wettenhall.—My presence was suddenly required in town by the India Board, and I was compelled to leave the spot, without having taken any definite measure to ascertain my fate. I left behind me, however, a zealous and indefatigable coadjutor in my friend—rather than servant—Morton, who was my wounded companion in the battle of Alexandria, and has remained ever since in my service.

“In a few days I was at liberty, and flew back like a bird, who had too long deserted a solitary young one in its nest. Morton told me he thought he had made some discoveries, but that certain circumstances had just come to his knowledge, which would require prompt measures, in order to prevent my hopes—if they should be well-founded—from being frustrated, in a manner which I certainly had not anticipated.

“The zealous affection of this most faithful of servants, had led him to associate with all descriptions of persons, and, spending his money freely among them, he soon became welcome wherever he made his appearance. On the day preceding my return, he had been at the Plough, a little inn in the village, about two miles distant, and the landlord, with a knowing and confidential nod, observed, that some queer things would soon come out at the Squire’s at Oldysleigh. Morton was too much on his guard to betray a desire to know more than his host seemed disposed to communicate. He replied, therefore, in a careless manner, that ‘he and his master knew little of their neighbours, and were indifferent as to what they did, one way or another.’

“‘Ay, ay,’ said mine host, more anxious to tell in proportion as the indifference of his companion was perceived; ‘but this is a matter—I’m pretty sure—it’s something’——

“‘I suppose,’ returned Morton, smiling, ‘the old gentleman’s going to make a fool of himself, and marry.’

“‘No—no such thing: it’s the young fool. No, no—I don’t mean to say that either.—Mind—I say nothing.’

“In short, after much circumlocution, to prove that he was betraying nothing, he *did* betray that Mr Wettenhall, the heir presumptive to Sir Luke’s property, had ordered four horses—the landlord himself only keeping a pair—from Bristol, which, to avoid observation, were to be sent to his stables before daylight the succeeding day, and to be kept ready harnessed, for the purpose of some secret expedition. In the course of the next

morning, Morton learned further—that the horses and carriage were to repair, by a circuitous road, to a very solitary spot in Oldysleigh park—called Barton Coppice, as soon as it was dusk.

“Morton was satisfied, after the most minute enquiry, that Miss Ellice was the object of all these preparations; but whether with, or without, her own consent, was not so easy to be ascertained. In my view of the case, the distinction was of no consequence.—I armed myself and Morton, and determined—after I had arranged my plan so as to ensure success, if any interference should prove necessary—to watch the proceedings of the parties as closely as possible, in order to pick up such further particulars, as might throw a light upon this mysterious business.

“Fortune favoured me beyond my hopes. As I was skirting the very coppice under the cover of which the adventure of the evening was to be achieved, for the purpose of making myself, like an old soldier, master of the field—my ears were suddenly assailed by a female shriek, and at the same moment I saw Miss Ellice flying from an apparently infuriated stag. I ran to her assistance as nimbly as my shattered frame would permit me; but, before I had arrived at the spot, she was already under the guard of two champions, who, instead of allowing me any share in the glory of delivering her, were at high words, and nearly at open war—in disputing that glory with each other. Mr Owen, however, bore off the prize in triumph, in a manner which clearly evinced, that his captive wore her chains without feeling any dread or apprehension of their galling or distressing her.

“This threw a new light upon the business; and I was resolved to probe Mr Wettenhall, in order to draw from him, in an unguarded moment, if possible, the nature of his attachment, and the ultimate object he had in view. He shrunk from the operation; but I saw enough from his symptoms to conclude his intentions were”——

“Honourable, of course,” cried Mrs Mapletoft—interrupting the narrative, in her anxiety to gain information.

“Doubtful, at least,” rejoined the major; “and I took my measures accordingly. The drivers I had secured by bribes, which the young gentleman could not have anticipated, and, therefore, could not exceed. Morton accompanied me to the coppice early in the afternoon, where we lay concealed till the dusk approached, and the carriage was on its way to the rendezvous. Shortly after, we perceived Mr Wettenhall and Ellice Craig advancing slowly towards us.”

“Pen Owen, you mean, I presume,” observed Mr Mapletoft, calmly.

"No, sir," said the major—"I am correct"—

"What can this mean?" exclaimed the wife.

"They approached the spot where we stood, concealed by some bushes," continued the major. "I heard the young gentleman pleading his cause as a lover, in which vows were largely pledged, and his sufferings most eloquently set forth, but which received no return beyond that of entreaties from the anxious girl, that he would avoid Pen Owen, and pass over the irritation which his rashness had that morning occasioned. The lover more ardently urged that she had it in her power to set that question wholly at rest, by returning his affection and rejecting his rival. An indignant answer followed—and, in a moment, a shrill whistle was heard. This was the signal agreed upon; and Wettenhall, seizing his intended victim round the waist, was bearing her, screaming, towards the carriage"—

"Impossible!" exclaimed Mrs Mapletoft.

"Abandoned!" sighed the vicar.

"Have patience, my dear madam.—We rushed forward; and Morton, who is a strong and powerful man, seized the lover, and, holding a pistol to his breast, drew him into the recess which we had just quitted."

"Why, my dear sir," again cried Mrs Mapletoft, shedding a flood of tears, "we looked upon this young man as a paragon—a"—

"Nay, madam, he may not be so bad as your imagination is at work to paint him."

"Listen, my love," said the vicar; "let us hear the whole before we judge."

"All resistance on his part," continued the major, "was fruitless; for he soon saw he had lost his allies the post-boys.—I addressed myself to the almost fainting girl, who wept her thanks for the service I had rendered her. 'Think me not,' I said, 'so disinterested as I may appear to be, madam. I have an interest—an affection deep-rooted in my heart, that draws me to you—which perhaps unites us—nay, identifies our fate.'

"She shrunk back, apparently thinking herself not much benefited by the exchange of lovers," said the major smiling. 'I have,' I continued, 'but one single question to ask; and on that depends my life, my hopes, my all!'

"She shuddered."

"Tell me,' I asked, 'who—who were your parents?'

"She seemed relieved, but, at the same time, hurt and offended."

"Oh, think not,' I cried, 'that I am urged by curiosity, or influenced by any frivolous motive.—You are not the child of Mr Mapletoft?'

“‘No, sir,’ she replied.

“‘Are you—are you?’—I could not proceed.

“‘I am, sir,’ she answered, ‘an orphan—born’——

“‘On the field of battle?’ I demanded, trembling.

“She started——

“‘The child of’——

“‘The child of nobody—the child of’——

“‘Of a doating—too blessed—too happy father!’ I exclaimed, in an agony of bliss.

“She fell senseless in my arms. I bore her to the carriage. It was the thought of the moment. I desired Morton to release his prisoner; and, addressing myself to him, told him, at his peril to reveal what he had heard, until he received my sanction to do so; I added, that his honour, perhaps his life, was in my hands; and his compliance with my demands, admitted of no alternative. We drove off, and, taking a wide circuit, in order to mislead those who might observe or trace the carriage, pursued a lane which communicated with my own paddock, and conveyed my still senseless treasure, by a private door, into the house of—HER FATHER!

“She was soon restored to her senses; but her recollections were imperfect, and it was not until I had again repeated the assurance of my own blessing, that she was fully aware of our relative situation. You, my dearest, and most revered friends, who have known her from her infancy, to whom she is indebted for the cultivation of a mind, equalled only by the loveliness of her form, may judge of her feelings, and the manner in which she received the first benediction of a parent, of whose existence she had no previous conception.”

Here the emotions of the party were too strong to be restrained. The fond and grateful father pressed to his bosom the protectors of his child, and was pressed to theirs, with equal warmth, in that sacred character; at length, after a pause, given to this ebullition of feeling, Mrs Mapletoft asked, “where was her child, for such she must always esteem her?—why she had been so long kept away? and why she was not with the major now?”

He smiled through his tears, and answered “that he thought the scene was already sufficiently agitating, without any addition; and that, even as it was, he had not been adroit enough to bring about the explanation without incurring some hazard.”

Mrs Mapletoft coloured; and the vicar only replied, by taking his hand between both his, and pressing them with the reverence of internal esteem.

He resumed the conversation. “As to your remaining questions, my dear madam, they require a more particular and detailed explanation. It was scarcely less painful to me, than

to my dear child, to keep you in any suspense, or uncertainty, respecting her fate ; but I saw, or thought I saw, in the character of young Wettenhall, a desperation of purpose, which, without withdrawing the object from his machinations, might render my new discovery but a dream of joy, which the destroyer might dissipate at a blow.

"When the activity of pursuit had sufficiently vented itself to afford me a clear field, I replaced my beloved child in the carriage; and about two hours after midnight, finding that Wettenhall and Pen Owen had taken the two main roads to London, proceeded, without changing horses, to Upton, and thence through Worcester to the North of England, where business respecting a property devolved to me from my friend the Colonel, would necessarily have called me in the course of a few weeks.

"By this manœuvre I felt secure of eluding the vigilance of both the pursuers of my child ; the one, because he had no clew whatever to her discovery ; the other, because he had a clew, which would quickly have enabled him to carry his projects, whatever they might be, into effect, if I had either remained at home, or proceeded in any direct road. From York, I dispatched the first letter to you, my good friends ; and I could not resist the entreaty of my child, soon after, to assure you of her safety and satisfaction under her own hand"—

"Good heavens !" exclaimed Mrs Mapletoft, "we construed that letter into an admission of her marriage with Pen Ower, whom the vile hypocrite, Wettenhall, led us to believe had stolen her away from us."

"Pen Owen !—No, madam," said the major, apparently much agitated ; "no, he was really ignorant ; but surely Wettenhall didn't impute the"—

"He did worse, my dear sir," cried Mapletoft, striking the ground with his foot ; "he insinuated—he led us to infer"—

"Yes," said Mrs Mapletoft, interrupting him ; "and though he knew all the time what disgrace the poor dear Pen was in, never led us to suppose he might be innocent"—

"That would have proved himself guilty," observed the major ; "but come, my dear madam, I fear I have more surprises in store for you ; and I doubt very much whether the condemnation of Mr Wettenhall will go far to acquit your favourite, Mr Pen Owen, of whom, indeed, it was the first wish of my heart to believe all I had been taught to think of him."

"Surely," cried Mrs Mapletoft, "you have proved him innocent of the crime for which he has been so unjustly condemned and banished."

"True, my dear madam ; but from the moment in which I

discovered his attachment to my beloved child, and still more, when I ascertained that the passion was reciprocal, it became the chief, the sole study and object of my life, to watch and to analyse his conduct. Her happiness was too precious to be risked upon an experiment."

"He has not," asked Mr Mapletoft, "conducted himself with any impropriety towards her, I trust?"

"I have taken good care of that," answered the major; "for he is as ignorant of the place of her retirement, as of my connexion with her. I met him in London, and by every attention in my power, endeavoured to cultivate his acquaintance and friendship, but suddenly—nay, rudely, and without the most remote provocation on my part—he not only slighted, but absolutely spurned me. I thought it probable that some slander had poisoned his mind, and I sought for an opportunity of explanation; but before I could attain my object, I found him—by an act of extreme rashness and imprudence, to call it by the mildest name—involved in a very serious offence against the House of Commons, in which he resisted every offer of accommodation, as well as the advice or suggestion of those who would have befriended him. I saw nothing vicious in this; but there was much to be apprehended from such intemperance by a father anxiously interested in the future happiness of his daughter. He was committed to Newgate."

"In that, too," observed Mr Mapletoft, "we were deceived. We thought he had been more criminal. I don't wish to palliate his rashness—far from it."

"I was disposed to make every allowance," continued Major Irwin; and as he had laid open to me in part the state of his circumstances, I dreaded his being exposed, in such a state of mind, to the additional misery of finding himself without resources. I therefore *contrived* to supply his necessities, without offending his pride."

"You sent him the hundred pounds, then," cried the vicar.

"How!—what can you know?"——

"Poor fellow," cried Mrs Mapletoft, "he was cnarged with having fabricated the story of an anonymous gift, for a purpose too mean to be"——

"Hold there, madam," cried the major, interrupting her, "meanness, I believe, cannot be charged upon him. His passions may lead him into error—into vice—but I think I have read his character sufficiently to be assured that there is nothing mercenary in it."

"He could not have learned it," cried the lady, looking proudly on her husband, "from him who laboured to instil good principles into his mind."

"His principles, my dear," answered the vicar, dryly repelling the compliment, "in the best view we can take of them, are not likely to reflect any great lustre upon those who may be supposed to be responsible for them."

There was a harshness in the expression of the good vicar's countenance, and in his words, very unusual, and his wife was silenced. The major eyed him with an inquisitive glance, but said nothing. Mr Mapletoft perceived the effect of his observation, and he added—

"It is a comfort, however, to find that on some points his errors have been exaggerated, and our suspicions upon others even unfounded; but think, sir—conceive the excesses to which his intemperance could lead him, when he rashly dared to pen a challenge to his venerable and respected uncle."

"Is it possible!"

"I could not have conceived it to be so," answered the vicar; "but here is the proof," producing Pen's unfortunate note, intended for the major, which, by confounding persons with the association of place, he addressed to Caleb Owen, Esq., instead of Major Irwin at Oldysleigh. The vicar added, "I fortunately intercepted it, and saved his good uncle that shock, at least."

"Depend upon it," said the major, reading it a second time, "there is some mistake here. His duty and affection towards his uncle were too evident to be questioned, whenever his name occurred in our few conversations. Nay," added he, looking at the date, "he appears all along to have been influenced by some error respecting myself, which I never could account for, and which renders it probable this challenge was intended for me, for there was an armed battery in his looks the last time I accidentally encountered him."

"Bad enough, in all conscience," observed Mrs Mapletoft; "but not so bad as"——

"No," interrupted the vicar smiling; "there may be an alternative between a parricide and a murderer left for him. It is, however, some consolation as we proceed, to find that from all his excesses we have hitherto been able to make some deduction, and we must e'en hope for more in our further progress."

"Spoken like yourself," cried his wife, now looking up in his face; "and who knows but that he may come fresh and pure out of the waters of adversity."

"We interrupt the major," was the reply of Mapletoft, whose smile was that of incredulity, she thought.

The major then entered into a detail of circumstances, in which the conduct of our hero certainly did not appear to advantage. He feared he had formed bad connexions, and mentioned the disgraceful scene by which his daughter had been

shocked, when she, for the first time, had left her house, for the purpose," he added, "of paying a charitable visit to the unfortunate Mrs Weston"—

"Weston!" exclaimed Mapletoft with a look of eager enquiry.

"What about Mrs Weston? who is *she*?" demanded Mrs Mapletoft, who had watched the turn and direction of her husband's eye.

"Nothing, my dear—you don't"—

"She is half-sister to my servant—my"—

The major, too, had observed the expression of the vicar's countenance, and caught a sigh that seemed to come from the bottom of his heart. "I see," he added, "my apprehensions are too well founded."

"Not *now*," said Mapletoft, with something like an imploring look, whilst the eye of his wife was averted.

"Mr Wettenhall," the major went on to say, "upon whom I thought it expedient to set a watch on my first arrival in town, by some means unknown to me discovered the place of my abode, and artfully sought to obtain an interview with my daughter. I have since learned she was even imprudent enough to promise at length to see him, in consequence of a solemn assurance that he had something to reveal to her, which was essential to the character of her friend, Pen Owen, and to the future happiness of her life. Accidentally, I returned home on the evening of the appointment in time to frustrate the plan, although Morton traced him to the door; and I have since discovered that he was actually in my house, and concealed within a cabinet in my room. I met him soon after; and he expressed his contrition in terms of so much apparent sincerity, that I am almost induced to think I have judged too harshly of him. In one respect his conduct has been truly honourable"—

"I'm glad of that, at least," said Mrs Mapletoft.

"In what respect?" asked the husband.

"He has condescended to seek a reconciliation with that impetuous young man, Pen Owen, for the purpose of withdrawing him, if possible, from the connexions he appears to have formed, and to restore him to his friends before he has involved himself in more serious difficulties."

"That is indeed praiseworthy," observed the vicar; "but there is still something mysterious and unexplained in the conduct of this young man. He certainly has never directly communicated any thing to the disadvantage of Pen, and yet"—

"True," cried Mrs Mapletoft; "but he has never returned from town without convincing us that he knew more than he chose to communicate; besides, he never undeceived us with respect to poor Ellice."

"That may be accounted for, my dear madam," said the major, "by the pledge which I demanded from him when he became master of my secret."

They now entered into the various details respecting the conduct of our unfortunate hero, which, as we who have all along been admitted to his confidence are already acquainted with, and cannot but own might, with very slight colouring, be easily converted into higher crimes and misdemeanours against the prescribed laws of social life, it may be imagined, did not very much increase the balance on the credit side of the account.

The major now took his departure—having previously stolen an occasion for a few words with Mapletoft, on his wife's leaving the room—and being obliged to return immediately to town where he had left his daughter, he promised to return with her in a few days, and to reinstate her in the hearts of those connexions who had been endeared to her from her earliest youth.

It may be supposed that this interesting conversation would have been immediately transferred to the little council at Oldysleigh; but, at the particular request of the major, the domestic explanations were to remain, for the present, confined to their own breasts; and, as far as Wettenhall was concerned, Mapletoft was disposed to withhold every thing which could tend to wound or distress Sir Luke, until he had some more sufficient authority upon which to ground a conclusive opinion.

CHAPTER XXXV.

SIR LUKE OLDYSWORTH had been one morning closeted for several hours with his lawyer, when Mr Mapletoft entered the room: and the baronet, pointing to some papers which lay upon the table, informed him that they contained the necessary documents for the conveyance of New Manor (an outlying estate on the borders of Dorsetshire) to young Wettenhall.

"It is but right," added he, "that the heir to this property should, even in my lifetime, possess an independence, and, if he choose it, an establishment suited to his rank and future situation in life. This will answer the purpose to a certain degree; and although the house is of a moderate size, an estate of about two thousand a-year round it will, at least, enable him to make himself comfortable during the short time I may keep him out of the entailed property."

Mapletoft expressed some surprise at the sudden adopt on of a measure upon which he had never been consulted—as was usually the case, even in the most trivial matters—and which, to say the least of it, was of a nature which required deliberation and forethought. “Besides,” added the good vicar, “it is, if I understand the case rightly, the only disposable property—that is, the only property which is not entailed upon the heir.”

“It is so,” answered the baronet.

“Surely, then,” resumed Mapletoft, “it would be better to make the young man an allowance equal, or greater if you will, but not to part with that which gives you a power and authority to act towards him, eventually, as his conduct may deserve.”

“The young man is worthy and amiable, and his conduct towards me peculiarly gratifying.”

“Your knowledge of him,” Sir Luke, observed the vicar, “is short, and necessarily imperfect; he *may* be all that is excellent; still, to render him wholly independent upon you, is an experiment”——

“Which I should have not been disposed to make,” returned the baronet, “if—if”

“If what, Sir Luke?”

“If—but I am betraying a secret, which”——

“I do not wish to penetrate into your secrets, Sir Luke,” said the vicar.

“Not mine!” returned the baronet; “I have none, as you well know: and this is the only point on which I have not consulted you for many years past.”

“I confess, it was that which surprised me; it is a point, too, of some importance.”

“Then it is vain to act longer on the reserve with you, my good friend,” cried the baronet; “the young man—in short, here is a letter, I received from him a few days ago.”

Mr Mapletoft took the letter, which was couched in the most respectful and affectionate terms. It stated that the writer had met with a young lady in every respect, he felt assured, suitable to the wishes and prospects entertained by Sir Luke for his heir; that there were circumstances of delicacy which rendered the disclosure of her name and family for the present impossible. That although he trusted the day was far distant when he should possess the means in his own right of settling upon a wife a suitable provision, he thought it might be advisable, even under existing circumstances, to prove to the lady that he had no mercenary objects in view in marrying her.

The subject, though delicate, was treated in a manner that could give no alarm to Sir Luke, although he could not doubt that the young man alluded to the property in question, which

the baronet, in the openness of his heart, had more than once given him reason to conclude, would go with the other estates to his heir. When Mapletoft had finished reading the letter, he folded it up, and turned it between his fingers ; then re-opened it, and read again particular paragraphs—but said nothing.

The baronet stared, and so, perhaps, may the reader, especially if he be not of that order of beings who shrink from giving pain to a friend, and who prefer silence on a doubtful point, to that eager desire, evinced by too many persons, of communicating intelligence, if it be calculated to surprise, even though it should carry with it a venomous shaft to the heart of “a very good friend.”

Mapletoft was one of those ; he had carefully kept from the baronet the suspicions entertained by Major Irwin, and communicated in his recent conversation with him, respecting young Wettenhall. He would have done so, out of regard and pity for the old man, even had those suspicions been confirmed ; but whilst there was a doubt or a hope upon the subject, he had determined to remain silent. This letter, however cautiously worded, awakened an apprehension in the mind of the vicar, not very favourable to the young man, under the circumstances in which his character had been placed by the major ; and the mysterious allusion to a mistress, and the plea of secrecy, where there appeared no motive for concealment, at least towards Sir Luke, tended to increase his suspicions. He was therefore embarrassed, and unable to reply to the twice-repeated question of Sir Luke, “what he thought of it ?”

At length—he recurred to his former observation, on the necessity of care and deliberation in a matter of so much importance. “Take time,” added he ; “take time, my dear sir, at least, to reconsider the matter.”

“There it is,” cried the baronet smiling ; “half confidences only beget distrust ; and we must out with the last drop to save one’s own consistency. You must know then, in short, look here is a second letter, which I received by express yesterday, and which I would not for the world our good friend Caleb should see ; it would break his heart—this—this renders it necessary to act without delay.”

The second letter which Mapletoft now opened, was written in a tone of distraction, stating the circumstance of the duel with Lord Killeullane, and the probable consequences of the writer’s rash acquiescence in the demand of his services by Pen Owen, whose conduct, however, he represented in the most favourable manner. He painted the distraction of his mind on being compelled to fly his country ; at least until the fate of his lordship was ascertained, and the sufferings of the lady, to whom he

was attached, as little short of his own. He trusted that Sir Luke would not suffer any prejudice to arise in his mind, if in the ardent feelings of the moment, she had consented to be the partner of his flight; which, however, he had self-denial and fortitude sufficient to decline, as it was not in his power to place her in that rank of society which her birth and virtues were calculated to adorn.

He gave his address, at an inn on the Dover road, where he was, he said, for the present, concealed; and requested a letter from Sir Luke, to speak his forgiveness, if he could be brought to pardon the rash conduct into which he had been drawn, as his only consolation under the pangs and sufferings of his exile.

When Mapletoft had finished the perusal, the baronet said, "You see, it is utterly impossible, after this, to leave the poor lad without a suitable provision. I have written to him, and Ferrett will have finished the papers by the afternoon, when I shall send them off, by express. You see no objection to this, Mr Mapletoft?"

"Indeed, Sir Luke," answered the vicar, "I see no necessity for it."

"It will be a balm to his mind."

"The balm may be applied too soon; he should suffer for his rashness."

"It was your favourite Pen's rashness, not his."

"True! I defend not Pen; I grieve for him; but—Pen's *vice* is rashness. Mr Wettenhall has not hitherto shown any symptoms of that nature."

"So much the better."

"So much the more remarkable, at least."

"It was friendship for that boy, that led him to forget himself."

"He *did not* forget himself, when his friendship was put to a *severer* test."

"Why, surely, Mapletoft, *you* don't condemn him for not accepting Pen's rude challenge?"

"Far from it! but I *do* condemn him for not preventing Pen from accepting this!"

Mr Mapletoft found it easy, upon entering more fully into the discussion, to shake the resolution of a man who, from the habit of many years, had never acted without the advice and counsel of his friends. The baronet consented to dispatch the letter, which contained only a gentle remonstrance upon the young man's imprudent conduct, and a promise of interest and assistance in extricating him from his difficulties. He reserved all explanation to their future meeting; and, replacing the deeds in the drawer of his study-table, was in the act of sealing the letter, when the door suddenly opened, and, before the servants

could announce him, young Wettenhall rushed into the room, covered with dust, and his dress in the utmost disorder.

Having hastily, but respectfully, saluted Sir Luke, he sunk into a chair, and, striking his forehead with his hands, requested "an immediate and *private* audience" of the baronet.

The latter looked surprised, and Mapletoft arose; but recollecting himself, Sir Luke touched the vicar's arm, and beckoning to him to resume his seat, told the young man that his friend, Mr Mapletoft, was informed of every thing, and that he never acted without his judgment in any case of importance.

Wettenhall started from his chair. "Sir," cried he, in a voice half-checked by emotion, "whatever Mr Mapletoft may *know*, that which I have further to communicate must be for *your* ear alone."

"Be calm, be quiet, Frank: sit down," cried the baronet, in a soothing tone. "You are among friends. My good neighbour, Mapletoft, is as sincerely in your interests as myself."

"I doubt that!" cried Wettenhall, who in an instant appeared to be sobered by a conviction of his indiscretion.

"And why do you doubt it, sir?" asked the vicar. "Do you think I have *reason* to be otherwise than your friend?"

"I only meant," answered Wettenhall, "that what I have to say may tend to lower, in your estimation, one to whom you have ever been a friend; and, in communicating *HIS FALL*, I shall put whatever portion of friendship you may have for me to a severe test."

"Good heaven!" exclaimed Mapletoft, forgetting the implied insult in his awakened apprehension of misfortune, "what communication have you to make? Speak, I entreat you."

"I cannot find words, sir. The facts will be thorns to your heart, and I fear to trust myself. At the hazard of my life I am here. My steps are tracked"——

"You may easily embark from hence at once," cried Sir Luke.

"I wished, at all hazards, at all risks, to see you, my venerated friend," cried the young man, "before"——

"Speak, I entreat you!" exclaimed the impatient vicar. "What have you to say?—it is of Pen—it is of"——

"Alas, sir! he is"——

"What?—say"——

"The murderer of"——

"Of whom?"

"Of Major Irwin."

The arms of the vicar fell as if paralyzed, and a groan only escaped in the torture of the moment. He closed his eyes, and lay back in his chair in a state of mental agony.

The baronet, though less interested in the subject, owing to

the alienation of his regard, which the repeated reports of our hero's delinquency had occasioned, was too much shocked to enquire even the particulars of the event.

Wettenhall, in a subdued tone of voice, regretted the necessity of being the bearer of such grievous tidings.

At length Mapletoft exclaimed, "You, sir, you are not to blame in this, at least. Good heaven!—all my hopes are now frustrated—weakness, frivolity, imprudence, intemperance, all might have been atoned for; but this—oh, it is intolerable. What will become of his poor ill-fated uncle!"

The ice being broken, Sir Luke ventured a question, as to the cause and motive of so sanguinary an act.

"It is to be hoped," replied Wettenhall, sighing, "that it arose from some misunderstanding—some fatal error"——

"How—how *did* it happen?" cried Mapletoft impatiently.

"It is a long story, sir, and I dare not stop to"——

"Long or short, sir, life or death, I must have it before you leave this room," cried the vicar in a determined tone, and rose from his seat, as if resolved to enforce his demand should it be disputed.

"My dear Mapletoft," cried the baronet in a pacific voice.

"Sir," returned young Wettenhall, "I am not used to such a peremptory mode of inquisition."

"Used or not used, sir," retorted the vicar, "you must bear it now."

"Recollect, sir," said Wettenhall calmly, "when, upon a former occasion, you thought proper to subject me to interrogatories against my will, to which I submitted"——

"And must submit again and again, young man, or I am much mistaken."

"Indeed, friend Mapletoft," said the baronet interposing, "you are severe, unjust. What has Frank done to warrant this?"

"I have incurred the reverend gentleman's displeasure by being the unwilling testimony to his friend's delinquency," said Wettenhall with some asperity.

"Sir, sir, you waste time, and evade the question. If I have done you injustice, I shall be the first to atone for it. I am in a state little short of distraction at this moment; and all I demand of you is the relief of knowing at least the provocation received, in order that I may make up the balance of my account with the wretched young man whom you call my friend."

"I would do it willingly; but indeed," replied Wettenhall. "I am not sufficiently master of the circumstances."

"You know who the major is?" demanded the vicar, with renewed energy.

"Be composed, my dear friend," cried the baronet, again in-

terposing ; “ of course he does : it is the poor man who was called Black Jack.”

“ Psha, Sir Luke !—pray, pray, leave this young man to me. I again ask you if you know”——

“ Do *you*, sir ?” exclaimed Wettenhall with some surprise.

“ I do, sir ; and now let me ask, was his daughter concerned in the question ?”

“ His daughter, Mapletoft ?” cried the baronet smiling ; “ why, he has neither chick nor child.”

“ I entreat you, Sir Luke,” said Mapletoft, gently touching his arm ; then turning to Wettenhall—“ was Miss Irwin connected with this melancholy event ?”

“ She was, sir : it was in her arms that”——

“ Did Pen know Major Irwin ?”

“ Of course he did.”

“ You understand my question, sir. Did he know him to be the father of—of Miss Irwin ?”

“ I cannot say.”

“ Cannot say !—did you never inform him ?”

“ Never.”

“ And why did you not ?”

“ Indeed, sir, you presume too far upon my patience. Am I to be cross-examined, not only on my conduct but my motives ?”

“ If you have nothing to conceal, you can feel no objection. If you have”——

“ What then, sir ?” demanded the young man sternly.

“ It will avail you nothing to attempt it. And now, sir, with Sir Luke’s permission, I would ask—whether Miss Irwin be not the young lady to whom your affections are engaged ?”

“ What !” exclaimed the baronet ; “ *he* marry Black Jack’s daughter !—a proud, upstart nabob, who has never had the civility to return my visit !—he”——

“ Those are minor considerations, my dear Sir Luke. I wish an answer to my question.”

“ Which, however,” returned Wettenhall, “ I do not feel justified in giving.”

“ You *must* answer it, sir,” retorted Mapletoft, “ before you leave this room, or”——

“ Nay,” cried the baronet, interrupting him, “ it cannot be besides, it isn’t quite fair to sift young men on love matters.”

“ Mine is no idle curiosity, Sir Luke,” said the vicar, : “ it is a question of vital importance to us all, and which I must have answered.”

“ Not by me, sir, be assured,” observed Wettenhall, with a countenance that bespoke his determination.

“ Then you must abide the consequences. I am master of

your conduct, from the moment in which the meeting at Barton Coppice took place—the assignation”——

Wettenhall started on his legs. “Forbear, sir”——

“Answer my question, and put my forbearance to no longer trial.”

“I acknowledge then, that, from the first moment I beheld Ellice Craig, I loved her.”

“Who?” exclaimed Sir Luke; “Ellice Craig!—why, what the deuce—you’re both crazy, I believe. Why, isn’t she gone off with that runaway Pen; “and *you* in love with her!”

“She is”——

“Hush, sir,” cried Mapletoft, interrupting Wettenhall. “There is much” (turning to the baronet) “to be explained to you, sir; but this is not the time or place. I must have a few words more with this young gentleman.”

“Surely I have said enough, and at the risk of my own liberty.”

“No, sir; even *your* liberty, if it be *really* threatened, is of less importance than the elucidation of this mysterious affair. Is Major Irwin dead?”

“There were no hopes of his recovery when I left town.”

“And how happened you to be in town, when Sir Luke was led to believe that you were concealed at an obscure inn in the neighbourhood of the coast?”

“I had business—business of the utmost importance.”

“And that business”——

“Was of a private nature.”

“Not necessary to be concealed from friends, I should suppose,” observed Mapletoft rather contemptuously: “it was of course connected with the object of your affections.”

“I do not say so, sir.”

“But I ask if it was not so, sir, and must be answered, or”——

“It was, sir!”

“And who informed you of this fatal catastrophe?”

“I was witness to it—that is”——

“Enough, sir!—and did not prevent it, any more than the duel with that Irish peer!”

“I was too late, sir.”

“Where did it take place?”

“At—at”——

“Surely, sir, the question is easily answered?”

“Yes, it is; but I shall only incur your further displeasure, your”——

“Fear not, sir; I will do you ample justice if my suspicions have taken a wrong direction.”

“The event took place, then, at a house in the skirts of London, whither, to all appearance, Mr Owen had conveyed Miss

Irwin ; for it was in the moment that he was discovered at her feet by Major Irwin, that the fatal shot was fired."

"*He*, not knowing that the major was her father, and you, sir, being master of the secret, cautiously keeping it from him. — Who then, I demand," cried Mapletoft, starting on his legs, "who is the real murderer of that good and exemplary man?"

"*He*," cried the baronet, who could refrain no longer, "a good and exemplary man!—but, poor man, he is probably dead—and there's an end of all ceremony."

"Yes, Sir Luke, the best, the most humane, the most liberal of human kind, butchered by the policy of this man who stands before you, and who, by a word, might have saved a precious life; and (sighing deeply) have rescued a soul from mortal sin."

"This is not to be borne, sir," exclaimed Wettennall, whose patience seemed now stretched to its utmost limit.

"It must be borne, young man," retorted the vicar; "and much more, for the burden of iniquity will not be lightened upon the unrepenting sinner."

"Surely, sir, I might have motives for withholding the knowledge of a fact, without incurring the blame and penalty of an act, which no human foresight could have anticipated?"

"Could you not have prevented it?"

"No, on my soul, I could not; I did not arrive on the spot until the blow was struck."

"And how," cried Mapletoft, turning round upon him, as if inspired by some new suspicion, "how came you to the spot at all?—how happened you to know any thing of the place, or the assignation, or whatever it was?"

"I was distracted at the intelligence of Miss Irwin being carried off; and followed the carriage of Major Irwin, which I found at the door of the house."

This answer seemed to confound Mr Mapletoft. The young man had returned to town for the purpose, perhaps, of inducing Ellice to become the partner of his flight; and it was natural that he should join in the pursuit, and that he should track the father's steps. He felt he had been guilty of undue severity, and perhaps injustice, and bursting into tears, acknowledged that he was in the wrong. He even besought young Wettennall to pardon suspicions, which appeared now to have no ground but in his anxiety to avert the final sentence against his once-beloved Pen Owen.

After he had given way to his feelings for a few moments, he determined to make what reparation was in his power, by joining with Sir Luke in devising the best and most secret means of conveying him out of the reach of pursuit.

The young man gave, however, such satisfactory reasons for

retiring across the country to the neighbourhood of Dover, where were his servant and luggage, and which was also open to a friendly and private communication with London, that it was finally settled he should lose no time in setting forward on his journey.

At this moment, the butler entered abruptly, with a countenance of alarm and consternation; but before he could announce his purpose, two men followed him into the room—who going directly up to young Wettenhall, charged him to surrender in the king's name—and, producing a warrant, claimed him as their prisoner, under the name of Pendarves Owen.

Sir Luke and Mr Mapletoft immediately came forward in spite of the alarm created by this unforeseen intrusion, and assured the officer, that he was mistaken in the person, for that this gentleman's name was Wettenhall.

"And a very good name it is," observed the officer—"and we have *him* already secured on a warrant, sent down last week to Warwickshire.—You knew such an one, young gentleman, I dare swear—Wettenhall—a little affair of high treason, which will be soon settled.—Yours, I believe, doesn't go quite so far."

"His father!" whispered the baronet to Mapletoft, with a countenance which was quite sufficient to satisfy the officer that he had got possession of the right man.

Young Wettenhall, who soon recovered his presence of mind, which had naturally been suspended during the first surprise of his arrest, observed to the officer, that "he must recollect he acted at his peril—for that here, in the house of one of the first men in the country, and a magistrate, he was solemnly assured, that he was not the person named in the warrant—and, moreover, that the person so named was known to them."

"I am ready to act," said the messenger; "and be it on my own responsibility.—Mr Pen Owen is pretty well known upon town for several of his vagaries; and it was only on Thursday last, before the privy council, that he acknowledged he had taken different names.

"This is true," observed Wettenhall;—"having been engaged in an affair of honour, he was compelled to assume a disguise, and to take a borrowed name."

"Which he continued *rather longer* than was necessary," replied the officer; "since Lord Killcullane, as he must have known, was too slightly wounded to have occasioned a moment's anxiety."

"Lord Killcullane!" exclaimed Mapletoft; "what!—is he recovered?"

"Recovered!—why, bless you, sir, it was only a flesh wound, and a few ounces of blood."

"But *that* Mr Owen was not aware of," cried Wettenhall briskly.

"And were *you*, sir?" demanded Mapletoft of Wettenhall, with a returning look of suspicion.

"Not till this moment," answered he without hesitation; but turning to the king's messenger, (for such he was,) "you are incurring a very serious responsibility in detaining me as your prisoner."

"Not much, sir;—it seems, at least, you are pretty well acquainted with the history of Mr Pen Owen, and I can't be very far wide of my mark."

"Surely," returned Wettenhall, "you are not to be told that your inferences have nothing to do with the question; your warrant is specifically against an individual—and that individual, I solemnly assure you, I am not."

"Perhaps not, sir—and yet my information is pretty accurate. I was directed to follow my man to a certain house at Islington: I did so—and was just in time to see *you* enter it;—a woman who was sitting in a carriage at the door, called out to you by name—and you held up your finger with a menacing gesture to silence her.—I demanded of her if you were really Mr Pen Owen, and she, not suspecting my purpose, answered boldly in the affirmative.

"I rushed to the door of the house, which you suddenly closed upon me, and after some delay, it was opened by a Bow Street officer with whom I had some acquaintance. Whilst I was enquiring of him the cause of the disturbance up stairs; I saw you again, sir, rush down—and leaping a window which opened upon the leads of some outhouses, your activity soon distanced me in any efforts to follow you; so that I had to return, and proceed a considerable way about with my followers, in the hope of intercepting your flight. By this means you secured your retreat. It was necessary therefore to follow up the scent before it should cool. I dispatched my companion for this purpose, and returned to the house to obtain the further aid of one of the official runners; when I learnt that a gentleman had been killed by Mr Pen Owen, the lover of his daughter. I could have no doubt, therefore, as to your identity—and having traced you to the borough, we found your lair, where you had been for twelve hours, still warm, and followed on the track, which lay too strong to throw us out.—You had only forty minutes' start of us.

"My chum here was charged with a warrant, backed within this half hour by a county magistrate, against this same Pen Owen, alias Brown, alias Wettenhall, if you will have it so, on

a charge of murder ; and thus, sir, you see, my peril is but slight—even if I should be wrong in one of my *aliases*.”

Against the authority of a man so determined, and so apparently justified in enforcing it, Sir Luke, even as a magistrate, could not presume to act. He, however, remonstrated ; and, stating the circumstances of the case, again repeated all the arguments the occasion supplied, against the detention of a gentleman under the roof of his protector and friend, who certainly could not be identified with the criminal named in the warrant.

The messenger was civil and respectful ; but it would have been as easy to move the neighbouring masses of St Vincent's rocks, as the determination of that resolved and conscientious executor of the laws.

Mr Wettenhall was, therefore, compelled to acquiesce ; and having taken a melancholy leave of Sir Luke and the vicar, he entered the carriage waiting at the door to convey him with his agreeable companions in a post-chaise to London.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

It is necessary now to return to Major Irwin, who, upon leaving the vicarage, after his important and interesting disclosure, set off immediately for town. He found a note awaiting him from young Wettenhall, requesting an *immediate interview* at a certain coffee-house ; the major not yet being sufficiently satisfied upon certain points of his character, to warrant an appointment at his own house.

He was induced to think more favourably of him, on account of his friendly conduct to Pen Owen, whose insulting demeanour towards him he had himself witnessed. There was, too, an air of sincerity in the manner of this young man, when he repelled with indignation the implied suspicion of meaning any thing but what was honourable, had he succeeded in carrying off his daughter, that convinced the major he was entitled to a more favourable verdict than he, perhaps, had too hastily pronounced against him.

He repaired immediately to the place of assignation, and soon after Wettenhall, who had been there repeatedly during the day, made his appearance. He seemed to be much agitated ; and related to the major the event of the duel, and the steps he had taken for the security of his rash principal. He spoke lightly

of the danger he himself incurred, but said he was prepared to take such precautions as might be deemed necessary. He added, that it would be advisable for Pen to leave the country; to which the major readily assented, feeling that the further he was removed, the less chance there would be of his interfering with the happiness of his daughter.

Not so, thought she, when informed of this new instance of the ungovernable impetuosity and violence of his character.

"Surely, my beloved father," she said, "he now views things through some distorted medium.—His disappointments, and the anger of his family, have bewildered him.—Oh! I have known him from the moment I have known any thing, and he was always the gentlest—the kindest—the most benevolent of human beings."

"Nay, but, my loved child, you admit that he was at times unmanageable—and"——

"Only from the buoyancy of his spirits—a word, a look of rebuke, would quell him in an instant."

"You are a subtle pleader, Ellice.—I dare not trust you with the cause.—Oh, my darling!—restored image of thy mother—let me not seem to stand in the way of thy happiness. I will sacrifice my life readily, cheerfully, to secure it."

"What!—when I am only now blest by the presence of a parent—pledge yourself to tear him from me, to make me happy!" cried the playful girl, smiling through her tears.

"My child—my child!—I am tortured with the idea of this young man—on whom you depend, I too much fear, for your future happiness—what, what is to be said for him?"

"I can say nothing, my kindest of parents, and will say nothing;—he shall speak for *himself*—that you know is the spirit of our laws—and all women are friends to liberty."

"Thou saucy girl; but how shall we make him speak—how can he possibly defend himself? here are facts—stubborn facts"——

"I will be serious, my dear sir; and though I blush not to repeat that which I could not conceal from you, if I would, believe me, I will never bestow my hand without your consent."

"My consent! I can refuse you nothing; there now, you know your power."

"And that knowledge robs me of it; and yet, my too kind parent, believe me, I would not, even if your consent were yielded to my wishes, give my hand to a man whom I could not esteem; ay, and honour too! That I love Pen, I will not deny—that the earliest wish of my heart, was to devote it exclusively to him, I admit; but I would sooner that heart should break, than yield where duty forbade it."

"Child, child, don't talk of heart-breaking, unless you would break mine."

"No, my dearest father, fear not; I know *that* of my Pen Owen so thoroughly—am so convinced of his integrity, his honour, his principles, that I feel assured, when the clouds disperse, in which he appears to be involved at this moment, he will stand clear, and pure in your eyes, and leave my heart to be—any thing but broken."

"Do you recollect Rose Weston?"

"On my life," cried Elice, with an energy that astonished her father, "he is innocent! Oh, that my happiness depended, singly, on that contingency."

"It shall, by Heaven, my child—my angel child! If my suspicions, which, alas! are not slightly taken up, if they are unfounded, I will trust to your knowledge of the boy's character; and if you do not mould him to virtue, he must be—the devil himself."

"I am content," cried the blushing, laughing girl, as she flew into the embrace of her father; "and you, my beloved parent, shall be contented too."

The conversation now turned upon the situation of poor Rose Weston, who was no other than niece to his own confidential servant. Both the major and his daughter had taken a deep and tender interest in her melancholy story.

Henry Morton, who was the brother of the good-hearted woman we have seen displaying so much benevolence towards our hero in his distresses, had been wild in his youth, and, having dissipated a small patrimony, was reduced to the necessity of entering the army as a common soldier. His short career in arms terminated in fixing him with Major Irwin; and, on his return to England, his first object was to enquire after his widowed sister, and her child. The secret of her misfortune was, for some time, concealed from him; and not having seen his niece for several years, he attributed whatever he perceived of melancholy in her manner, to the habitual tone and character of her mind.

It was not for some time after their flight from the country, that Morton discovered the place of their retreat: and even then, no persuasion could induce either mother or daughter to give up the name of the person who had broken in upon the peace and honour of his family.

Major Irwin was soon informed of the circumstances; and, from his attachment to the uncle, was induced not only to visit, but to promise every aid and influence in his power, to obtain justice for the injured parties. When he visited this house of sorrow, his interest was more immediately and deeply engaged

in the cause, and he thought it no degradation to his daughter, to share with him the task of consoling the afflicted, and pouring balm into the wounds of adversity.

She had several times induced poor Rose Weston, whose constitution was visibly sinking under the combined influence of disappointment, confinement, and the impure atmosphere, to which she was unaccustomed, to accompany her in the carriage, for the sake of air and exercise, and it was in returning from one of these excursions, that Ellice Craig had witnessed the scene in which poor Pen appeared to so little advantage, as the hero of a London mob!

The major would have removed the mother and daughter to his own house; but this they resisted with a firmness, that convinced him there was an influence stronger than his own predominating over the fortunes of these unhappy people. He easily drew from them a confession, that they were forbidden to leave their present abode, and that their only hope rested on implicit obedience to the commands of the unknown seducer. Nothing, however—entreaties, remonstrances, even threats, could shake the resolution of Mrs Weston and her daughter, or induce them to give up the name of the object, so dreaded, and yet so beloved.

From certain circumstances which Morton had picked up in his repeated conversations with his sister, and which he subsequently connected with the simultaneous departure of Pen Owen from Oldysleigh with that of herself and her daughter from their home—only a few miles distant—he entertained strong suspicions that our hero was the guilty person. These were communicated to the major, who followed up the circumstances in his own mind, until he was almost morally certain of their justice. From some further information which he had gathered in a few minutes' private conversation with Mr Mapletoft, on his late visit to the country, his few doubts upon the subject were dissipated; and the next morning he determined to probe Mrs Weston, and to ascertain a point in which the happiness of so many persons dear to him was thus seriously implicated.

He would not wound the feelings of his daughter, by communicating the whole extent of his own information; and when she so confidently expressed the contrary conviction of Pen's innocence, he trembled to think of the thunderbolt impending over her.

On the following morning, according to his previous resolution, he proceeded to Mrs Weston's lodgings, near Smithfield, and having expostulated with her for some time, he became offended at her pertinacity in withholding the desired information, and assured her that, being fully acquainted with the name

and person of her daughter's seducer, he would take measures to obtain justice for her, in spite of herself.

A scene ensued, in which the anger of the major was, in spite of his better judgment, much softened; but hearing a voice in the adjoining room, which he could not for a moment doubt was that of Pen Owen, he rose indignantly from his seat—and now convinced, not only of the fact, but impressed also with suspicions, that tended to degrade both the mother and the child—denounced vengeance against them if any further concealment was practised. The anxiety of the poor woman that he should lower his voice—in which her fear even of his displeasure seemed to be lost—robbed him of the last hope; and he would have forced himself into the adjoining room, had she not, on her knees, entreated his forbearance, and, in an unguarded moment, solemnly pledged herself to make an unreserved communication to the major on the following day.

Part of this concluding conversation we, as well as our hero, were permitted to overhear; and whatever may have been the sentiments of the reader upon the occasion, we know that it excited no less indignation on the part of Pen Owen than of the gentleman on the other side of the partition, and had nearly brought him forth from his hiding-place—to anticipate the discovery of the major.

When the latter descended into the court in which Mrs Weston's lodgings were situated, he paused, and walked more than once up and down the flag-stones, doubting whether he should not wait in the neighbourhood till Pen thought proper to make his appearance. Dismissing the plan from his mind, however, as derogating from his own dignity, he passed to the outlet of the court, into the street upon which it opened, when, to his no small surprise, he encountered Frank Wettenhall, who did not perceive the major until they were face to face. They both started; and I believe it would be difficult to say which of them evinced, or really felt, the greater degree of astonishment.

"Have you any acquaintance in this neighbourhood?" asked the major with an air affecting as much of pleasantry as the real agitation of his mind would admit.

"Have *you*?" retorted Wettenhall, with a smile that showed he had perfectly recovered from the effect of the sudden surprise.

"Why—yes," returned the major, "I certainly have; but it cannot be an acquaintance of yours."

"If you mean in this immediate vicinity, certainly not; but I am in search of Mr Pen Owen, whose retreat is in this part of the world."

"It is," said the major, in vain endeavouring to suppress his

indignation ; “ and you have not far to go to find him. There, sir—there, sir,” turning to point at the lodging—“ there you will find the gentleman.”

“ Impossible !” exclaimed Wettenhall in a determined tone, that might have staggered the major himself, had not the question been put beyond all doubt by the sudden apparition of the identical Pen Owen, who, with an air of perfect indifference—apparently quite at home, and in his shirt sleeves—was airing himself at the very window towards which the immovable finger of the major pointed.

“ By —— !” exclaimed he, “ this is beyond belief ;” then raising his voice, uttered the menace which, on reaching the ears of our hero, inspired him with, at least, as sincere a disposition for vengeance as that by which it had been provoked.

Wettenhall, foreseeing the consequences of a meeting under such circumstances, contrived to hurry the major from the field, and to offer such opinions as he thought most likely to soothe the irritation of his companion, as he led him back to the west end of the town.

Such evidence as the major was now able to produce against our unfortunate hero, he thought of too clear and substantive a nature to warrant his withholding it from his daughter. She certainly was staggered, but not convinced. The facts were strong and inexplicable, but still she hesitated. Allowing that he had been guilty—had been led away by the violence of his passions—still, still she could not be brought to believe that he could be so altered—so totally the reverse of what he had ever been, as to sin without remorse, much less, that he could be so lost as to revel in iniquity and glory in dishonour. She nevertheless assured her father, that if these facts could be substantiated, she was ignorant of her own heart if it were not capable of submitting to sacrifice an object, every way so unworthy of its homage, without a murmur.

“ But,” cried the major, who was as angry as it was possible for him to be with her, “ why will you cherish hope in the face of facts incontrovertible—open to the face of day—seen by these eyes ?” She threw herself into his arms, and hiding her face in his paternal bosom, whispered—

“ I have pledged myself, my father, to do my duty—and I will do it—though my heart break in the conflict !”

The major was compelled to be satisfied, and would have been so, could he have read her heart. It was so pure, so gentle, that it was incapable of retaining any thing which could breathe a taint upon it. She would not, could not, reject the friend who had shared its impulses from the cradle, until she felt assured that his whole nature had been perverted—and this she could

not believe upon any evidence short of ocular demonstration, which, however, she could not but acknowledge was pretty nearly the case at present.

The major urged the question no more, but informed her of the measures he proposed to take, and the final resolution he had adopted with respect to the poor sufferers. He would wait upon Mrs Weston the next morning, when he would force her to redeem her pledge of making a full and unreserved communication of all the events by which she had been reduced to her present situation; that he would exert himself in her cause, and, if possible, see justice done to her and to her child; but that the first and only condition on his part should be, the abandonment of the protection to which they had thus disgracefully submitted, and without any communication whatever with Mr Owen.

"Or whoever else he may be," said Ellice smiling.

"Alas! alas! my child; but, no matter—they shall return with me to this house, and here have an asylum until something more effectual can be done. If there is law in the land that can reach the destroyer of domestic peace and innocence, my fortune shall be drained to secure it."

"Will you," he continued after a short pause, "accompany me in the carriage? I do not wish you to enter a place"——

"Make your own arrangements, my dear father, as you think best and most likely to effect your benevolent purpose. I can accompany you, and either wait in the carriage or add my persuasions to yours, if necessary."

The plan was arranged. In the morning the carriage conveyed them to the corner of the street which led to the court, and there remained, that the attention of passengers might not be attracted by such a phenomenon as a smart equipage at the opening of an obscure alley, whose inhabitants were all of the lower, if not the lowest, orders of society. Having left his daughter in this situation under the care of his servants, he proceeded, with Morton, to Mrs Weston's lodgings.

Upon entering the room, he perceived that his arrival was unexpected, or at least not expected so soon. There was an evident confusion in the countenance and manner of Mrs Weston; and he had not been long seated before he distinctly heard the door of the interior apartment gently opened, and a person steal down, whose footing the creaking of the old staircase betrayed at every step.

Mrs Weston seemed to be more composed, although she evidently observed that the attention of her visiter had been drawn to the circumstance. The poor Rose was in tears, and silently pursued her own thoughts. At length the major opened the purpose of his visit; he declared himself disposed and ready to

afford any, and every assistance in his power, to see justice done to the oppressed widow and her daughter; but that what he had witnessed the day preceding, and what he had just now unavoidably heard, tended to convince him that the first error was only likely to be the precursor of others. He added "how-ever anxious—and deeply anxious I feel—to bring back peace and happiness to your bosoms, I cannot be a tacit spectator of improprieties which"——

"Improprieties! indeed, indeed, my good and gracious benefactor," exclaimed Mrs Weston, interrupting him, "you are deceived in us. We have been grievously to blame; but it was ONE ERROR, and our guilt was too great credulity; we have done nothing since that can bear even a misconstruction."

"Madam! madam!" cried the impatient major, breaking in upon her in his turn, "am I, or am I not, to believe the evidence of my own senses; did I not hear—did I not see a young man, half-dressed, evidently with the air of an inmate, and on the most familiar footing, lounging out of this very window, a few minutes after I had left your house yesterday?"

"I do not—cannot deny it; and yet it is a mistake, imprudent, incautious young man!" sighed the poor woman, half-aside.

"That was Mr Brown," said Rose, who was roused by the energy of the major's manner.

"So be it, Miss Weston, call him by what name you please—I know him."

"He said—he admitted that he knew you," observed Mrs Weston.

"I doubt it not; but, madam, this is trifling; I had almost said evasive—you stand pledged to reveal to me the whole of the story, which you have hitherto weakly withheld from the knowledge of your brother and myself. I come to offer you protection! justice! independence! but you must fulfil your part of the covenant; for I cannot perform even my duty by halves. I will not—must not act in the dark."

"How am I racked! If—if, my dear sir, you had been half an hour later"——

"Your friend in the next room," cried the major, interrupting her, "would have fabricated a story for you!"

"Major Irwin," said the offended, but agitated woman, "I know not what it is to be guilty of a falsehood!"

"Why, then, hesitate to avow the truth? can a prompter be necessary, or is it possible you can be so weak as to rely upon a base wretch—a"——

"Who! who!" asked the poor girl, with vehemence turning round in her chair.

"No one, my child; our kind friend the major is only supposing"—

"If my supposition is false," continued the major, whom even the looks of the distressed girl could not arrest, in the pursuit of what he now considered an imperative duty, "it is easy to set me right. Mystery is the companion of guilt; if there be nothing wrong concealment is unnecessary—if"—

"Indeed, indeed, sir," answered Mrs Weston, "to-morrow, or perhaps this afternoon, I may be permitted to disclose every thing."

"To-morrow! no, madam, this instant, or we part to meet no more."

"Consider, for Heaven's sake, sister," said Morton, now coming forward, "what dangers you are encountering. The major is your friend—the scoundrel, who"—

"Nay, Harry Morton, do not *you* use such terms."

"What others can he use," cried the major, "to a man whom we know to be the slave of his own passions; and who cares not what victims he immolates to them!"

"Indeed, Major Irwin, you know him not."

"Woman! I know him better than you do."

"He is a stranger to you! indeed—indeed, he is!"

"Do you equivocate?—did you not even now own, that at least he knew *me*?"

"Oh, no!—no," answered Mrs Weston.

"Morton!" cried the major, provoked at the apparent evasion, "did she not?"

"Most assuredly, sir," answered he; "and I am ashamed, that a being, whom I have so long esteemed and considered only unfortunate, should so far forget herself, as to stand in the gap between my honoured master and a wretch, who least of all merits mercy at her hands!"

"I repeat, Harry Morton," cried the woman, bursting into tears, "you are misinformed."

"Misinformed!" cried the now powerfully excited major; "not know—PEN OWEN and his cursed acts—his unblushing atrocity—in courting one woman, whilst he"—

"He's betrayed!" screamed Rose Weston, and fell back in her chair in strong convulsions.

The mother ran to her aid, not, however, before she had admitted the truth of the major's suspicions by an exclamation, as unequivocal as that of her daughter.

The conversation was suspended, whilst each one of the party was anxiously interested, and devoted to the recovery of the poor girl. At length her recollection returned in some degree, and starting from her chair, she pushed aside those who surrounded

her, and rushed towards the door of communication between the two rooms. "Come, come, poor Pen, they have found you out; but heed them not, we will suffer together; there is nothing now to conceal, and we shall be blest, though in a desert!"

The weeping mother wrung her hands, and gently drew her daughter back, telling her he was gone.

"Gone!" exclaimed Rose, "whither!—gone, and without me!—he promised—but, oh! oh!" bursting into an agony of tears, "you have betrayed him, mother; and then—then, he threatened, never, never to return!"

"Villain!" muttered the major, turning to his servant; "what has he not to answer for!"

"I knew it, sir; I was convinced I could not be mistaken," said Morton, in a whisper to his master.

"Oh, save him! save my child!" cried Mrs Weston; "do not harm him, major; he will be all that we can wish him, if—if——"

"If!" cried Major Irwin, interrupting her, "if we suffer him to escape—no madam; I will see justice done to you and to this injured angel!"

"No! no!" cried the imploring girl, who had caught part of the sentence, "no justice! no justice! Pen is a man of honour; I know him—indeed, he has declared it"——

"Peace, my dear child," said the mother; "we will do the best; our kind, our benevolent friends have guessed the secret; *we* have not betrayed it, and they will see"——

"Yes," rejoined the major, "*I will* see to every thing; in the mean time, you, madam, and your daughter must go with me. Miss Irwin is waiting in the carriage for you; and you must not be left open to the machinations of this man, whom I know better than you do."

"Heavens! can it be!" sighed the poor woman, turning up her eyes, as if suddenly inspired with the conviction of a truth she had endeavoured to exclude.

"Go, Morton," said the major, "bring the carriage to the gateway, there can be no need of much preparation; your brother, madam, can remain behind, and will settle every thing that remains for you to do."

Morton went as he was desired, and Mrs Weston, unable or unwilling longer to contend with her positive benefactor, prepared to obey his orders; but when she would have put a little straw bonnet upon her daughter's head, the unfortunate girl pushed it away, screaming,

"I am not! indeed, mamma, I am not mad! do not believe them; do not part with me. Cruel! cruel! Why should they take me away! Pen will be here, and when I am gone he will

say I have deserted him! indeed! indeed! I will behave quite well! I am not mad!" and seating herself in her chair, she assumed an air of studied calmness, and a smile that spoke a world of wo within. It penetrated to the heart of the major, who silently ejaculated, "Heaven! can thy judgments fail to fall upon the perpetrator of this ruin?"

Rapid steps were at this moment heard ascending the stairs, and Morton, pale and almost breathless, rushed into the room.

"Has Miss Irwin been here!" demanded he, in a voice scarcely articulate.

"Here!" exclaimed the major, catching at his arm, to prevent himself from falling. "What do you mean?"

"She—she is gone!"

"Preserve my senses, Heaven!" exclaimed the major, rushing after his servant, who was already half down the stairs. They ran to the carriage, which remained where he had left it; but it was empty. The servants informed him that a few minutes after his departure, a note had been brought by a decent looking young woman for Miss Irwin, who immediately ordered the step to be let down, and telling the footman he need not follow, as her father wished her to go to him unaccompanied, walked off, and turning the corner of the street, was out of sight in an instant.

The feelings of the major may be easily imagined. He sank upon the step of the carriage, holding his hand to his head, as if to prevent despair, and collect his bewildered thoughts into some order for prompt action.

Morton perceived an open note on the seat. He gave it to his master. It was apparently in a female hand, written in pencil, and purporting to come from Mrs Weston, simply desiring Miss Irwin, in her father's name, to hasten immediately to her lodgings, as he required her assistance. She was expressly desired not to bring a servant with her, in order to preclude observation.

The major saw a depth of design in this, which prompt presence of mind only could counteract. He started on his feet, took Morton's arm, and desiring the carriage to follow, turned the corner, and enquiring at the several shops if they had seen a young lady under such and such circumstances, soon collected pretty nearly the whole that was to be learned.

A man, however, who had the appearance of a mere idler, sauntering about, and looking in at the several windows, now came up to the major, and told him, that if he was enquiring after the young lady who had been carried off, he could perhaps afford him a clue to her recovery. He added, that he should have interfered in the affair, if they who carried her off had not assured him she was a runaway wife.

He was one of the peace-officers left on the watch to secure any other of the reformers who might be found lurking in the neighbourhood, and on this account had particularly noted every thing that had occurred. He informed the trembling father, that a notorious radical, who had been guilty of murder, for whom they had been some time on the look-out, had made a violent assault upon one of the men who had seized the young lady, which confirmed him in the opinion that their story was true, as he naturally inferred that such a person was not likely to be employed on the side of justice. He added, that probably the man would have rescued her, had he not himself been apprehended at the moment by the police-officers.

The runner further informed the major—as his colleagues had previously told Pen—that they always took the number of a coach when any thing extraordinary was going forward; and that he doubted not, in a very few hours, if the gentleman would drive to Bow Street, and there wait for him, he should be able to trace the fare. The major would have preferred any plan in which his body could have been as actively employed as his feelings: nevertheless he saw that this was the surest, and probably the most prompt mode of arriving at his object, and therefore ordered his carriage to the place of appointment.

He remained at the public office for some hours, until his patience was nearly exhausted, when the runner returned, and told him he had traced the coach to a certain point, and that, if he would suffer him to mount the box of his carriage, he thought the enquiry might thus be more readily and quickly followed up. As the major was re-entering his chariot, the runner appeared to take his last information from a man who had entered the office with him.

“Again,” said he, “number 935?”

“Number 935—drawn off the Whitehall stand at 18 minutes past 3—seen by Ned Tip turning from Tottenham Court, on the Islington beat, at a quarter before four.”

“Why!” exclaimed the major, who overheard this communication, “it is only now a quarter past four.”

“The scent lies hot, your honour!” cried the man mounting the box; but, as his foot was on the wheel, seeming to recollect something, he called to his colleague—“Joe, did Griper know the fare’s name?”

“’Twas one OWEN, who turns up to have shot a Lord.”

“Villain!” exclaimed the major.

“Drive on!” cried the officer, and a very smart trot soon brought them to the Islington road, where one or two short questions, without stopping the vehicle, to a passing hackney coachman, and to a sauntering individual, who returned the watchword

like lightning, sufficed to direct them towards the object of their search, at the end of a bye street, where, in a few seconds, they found themselves abreast of the important hackney coach.

The major dashed out, and, unfortunately for him, ran up stairs, with Morton only, leaving his conductor to watch below, who, had he been of the party, and finding a comrade at the door of the chamber, would soon have come to an explanation, and prevented the grievous consequences which followed. The resistance he met with only sharpened his determination to force his way; and the defiance hurled at him, in the known voice of the now abhorred Pen Owen, drove him frantically on, till, bursting open the door, he received the contents of the rash young man's pistol in his body, and precipitated the catastrophe we have before related.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE state of Pen Owen's mind, when he found, from the exclamation of his beloved Ellice, that he had raised his hand against the life of her father, may be more easily conceived than described.

In the first ebullition of contending feelings, he had seized the second pistol, and would probably, in the momentary loss of reason, have directed it against his own head, had not a movement of the major inspired him with the sudden hope that his life might yet be saved. Rushing down the stairs, he ran in search of medical assistance, and was so fortunate as to find an apothecary in the adjoining street, with whom he flew back to the fatal apartment. On his return, he found Ellice recovered from her swoon, and supporting her father on the bed, where he had been lifted, with the assistance of the officer whom Pen had ordered into the room in the moment of leaving it.

The dishevelled hair and frantic appearance of our hero, dragging in the apothecary, aroused the attention of both father and daughter, who gazed alternately on him and each other, as he aided the attendant to discover and examine into the nature of the wound. The major, however, raising his right arm, observed, "that it was not likely to affect the patient so much as it appeared to do the person who had inflicted it."

Pen heard no more—throwing himself on his knees beside the bed, he grasped the hand of Ellice and of her father, and scream-

ing out, "God be praised!" burst into an hysterical laugh, and fell senseless on the floor.

The doctor remonstrated; but he forgot that the best arguments are unavailing, when addressed to those who either cannot or will not hear: so, having discovered that the ball had merely grazed the major's arm, and that his fall had been occasioned more by his own precipitancy, and the shock he experienced on discovering, as he supposed, all his suspicions confirmed, than by the wound, he very deliberately began to place our hero in a situation where, without any reference to the *Lex Talionis*, of which, probably, he had never heard, he proceeded to the execution of it, in a copious shedding of "blood for blood."

Ellice had quickly undeceived her father respecting the situation in which she had been found with Pen, and the major was disposed to believe much in favour of a man who had rescued his daughter from destruction, and whose feelings, however they might have led him astray on other occasions, were here excited in a manner which could not be reprobated by him. When, however, he saw his child hanging over the insensible form of our hero, weeping and wringing her hands, in a state little differing from his own, the recollection of his guilt with the unfortunate Rose Weston burst upon his mind, and disregarding his own wound, he started from the bed, and taking his daughter in his sound arm, gently drew her towards him. He entreated her to be comforted, and then whispered "discretion," where the exposure of her feelings might involve her with a man unworthy to excite them.

"HE IS INNOCENT, ON MY SOUL!" she exclaimed; and then, as if thoroughly satisfied on that point, she turned upon her father, and loudly reproached herself for having risked his safety by bringing him from the bed, on which the doctor had desired him to repose.

Pen Owen began to exhibit symptoms of recovery; but the revulsion was so overpowering, that the apothecary declared his life to be in danger, if he was not immediately put to bed, and every precaution taken, to secure him from any additional cause of agitation.

Mrs Weston having resigned her daughter to the care of a neighbour, had followed the major when he left her house, and although his activity had eluded her first researches, she at length traced his carriage to Islington; but being unwilling to intrude herself unless her services should be required, she had taken her seat in the carriage she found at the door, to await the event. When, however, she had learned imperfectly from the door-keepers what was passing above stairs, she flew to the aid of her benefactors, and hurrying into the room, beheld a

scene sufficiently terrific to awaken every feeling, and inspire her with horror.

The major lay on the bed, the clothes of which were profusely stained with blood—his daughter holding one of his hands, whilst she watched with the keenest apprehension, the still languid form of her lover, who, supported on two chairs, pale and bloody, seemed scarcely to breathe, or to be conscious of what was passing around him. His eyes half open, wandered from object to object, as if incapable of fixing upon any one, and labouring to identify something, with the vague recollections which confounded him.

Mrs Weston caught the last words of the apothecary, and, in a moment, collected sufficient to induce her immediate and active co-operation. She had observed another bed-room as she passed up the stairs, and thither she insisted upon our hero being carried;—she instituted herself his nurse, and with that activity which generally accompanies true benevolence, she arranged and settled every thing in a few minutes—nor was Ellice to be deterred by any mistaken sense of propriety, or even by the looks of her father, from contributing to the means of restoring her unfortunate playmate—if not her lover, to himself.

The motion occasioned by the operation of lifting him from the chair, seemed for a moment to rouse him, and at the same time, catching a glimpse of the strong interest expressed in the countenance of Mrs Weston, who hung over him, watching his looks, he made an effort to squeeze her hand, and half murmured a request to “forgive him, for still being a burden to her kindness!”

“There,” exclaimed the major, calling peremptorily upon his daughter to leave the invalid. “Come hither, my child—I insist. Will not his own confession satisfy you?”

“He has confessed nothing,” whispered Ellice, approaching her father.

“Does he not acknowledge?”—

“Hush, sir!” cried Mrs Weston, turning to the major, who was raising his voice, “we must not flurry him!”

“Woman!” exclaimed the major, upon whose mind was reflected back the more vividly from the intervening interest which had absorbed it, the occurrences at her lodgings: “Woman! what have you to do with a wretch?”—

“My father!”—cried Ellice, placing her hand upon his arm.

“Whatever may be his faults, Major Irwin,” replied Mrs Weston, “his virtues are sacred to me!”

“His virtues! you drive me mad—what! a”——

Before he could finish the invective, our hero was conveyed

from his presence, followed by his kind attendant, who gently shut the door, to prevent the remainder of the sentence from being heard.

It was not finished, for perceiving the agitation of his weeping daughter, who sat at his bed-side, he forebore, in pity, to aggravate the crimes of a being so fatally endeared to his beloved child. Still, his duty led him to believe, that this was the moment in which his appeal was to be made to her delicacy; and that, however painful or agonizing the struggle, she must be urged to preserve her dignity and purity, at the risk even of happiness.

"My child! my child!—why—since it was the will of providence I should discover you—discover you too—all that the fondest and most anxious father could wish, or fancy—why was I doomed to find you thus entangled in a hopeless attachment? He is, with many, many virtues, unworthy my Ellice. Can she take to her arms the seducer of innocence, and confirm his more than savage barbarity, by depriving him of the only means now in his power of healing the wound he has inflicted!—of making reparation to the broken-hearted Rose!"

"Never!—by the mercy of Heaven, I swear!" cried the trembling girl; "never shall you, my dearest father, have to reproach your child with such a crime; but"——

"But what, my beloved!—can you still doubt, after the mother's—the girl's—his own confession.—After all I have related to you—the evidence of my own eyes and ears;—the testimony of even strangers?"

"Still, my father!—still let me enjoy the illusion—if it be one—suggested by my doubts; by my knowledge of his native worth, which cannot—cannot have undergone such a revolution in so short a period!"

"Alas, alas! what have you to feed this illusion? did you not hear his avowal—implied at least—in what he whispered to that infatuated woman."

"To me, my best of fathers, he disclaimed all love for Rose Weston—and was proceeding—yes, I recollect now—he swore he loved her not—when—when you—horrible! horrible! received the——. I cannot bear the reflection of what might have been the consequences!"—

Here her tears and agitation checked further utterance, and she fell on the pillow beside her father almost bereft of sense.

Mrs Weston entered the room at this moment, and seeing her situation, flew to her assistance. She was soon restored, and eagerly asked after Pen Owen.

"We had better not speak of him now, my dear Miss Irwin," she replied, looking anxiously towards the major.

"You are quite right, Mrs Weston," observed the major; "I am glad to hail the symptom of returning reason."

"But how is he?" cried the still persevering and anxious Ellice.

"Well—I believe!" answered Mrs Weston.

"Well!—is he so soon recovered?"

"Recovered!—has he been ill?"

"My good Mrs Weston," exclaimed the major, benevolently looking upon her, and raising himself on the bed—"for God's sake take care of yourself; you are overtaking your bodily strength, and"——

"No! no! my worthy benefactor; when the mind is active, the body will support it even"——

"True!—but I fear the mind is"——

"Why!" cried Ellice, again interrupting the conversation; "why do you conceal the state of your suffering patient—is he—is he—oh, speak! is he worse; or what does this ambiguity mean?"

"No! indeed, sweet lady, be composed;—he is recovering fast; and I came to tell you, that he now recollects all that has passed—and is anxious to be admitted to see the major and yourself."

"Present my compliments," said the major gravely, "to Mr Pen Owen—and tell him, when he is ready to atone to you and your injured daughter, for the crimes of which he has been guilty towards you—my daughter and myself will bid him welcome; then"——

"Nay, sir! I would not wish you to see him; I would not see him myself—till—till—he prove himself to be what he has professed."

"Then why be the messenger of such a request; why"——

"I!—I never should have presumed to name him to you, had you not"——

"Detected him!—Mrs Weston!"

"Be it so, my good sir!—I was bound not to betray him."

"See you now, Ellice," cried the major, with tears in his own eyes;—"see you *now* the truth."

Without replying, but with a deep-drawn sigh, his daughter turned to Mrs Weston, and asked in a faltering voice, "why, then, she had delivered his message."

"A message from Mr Pen Owen!" exclaimed Mrs Weston, with an air of surprise.

"Did you not," demanded the major, "within these two minutes, say, that he desired to be admitted to the presence of my daughter and myself?"

"Who?"

"Why, Pen Owen!"

"Not I, on my soul, sir!"

"Ellice—what are we to think?"

"Surely," cried Ellice, starting up—"surely, Mrs Weston, you said so."

"The message was from my poor invalid below."

"Well!"

"From P— P— Pen Owen!" faltered out poor Ellice.

"No!—HE was not in my mind at the moment."

"Who then?—speak!—explain!"

"From my poor suffering friend and benefactor below."

"Woman! woman! you drive me mad; is not that Pen Owen?"

"Pen Owen!—No, sir."

"You prevaricate."

"Speak!" exclaimed Ellice; "whom do you mean—who?"

"Why, Mr Brown to be sure."

"Brown!" repeated the major.

"Heaven has heard my prayer," screamed Ellice; and sank lifeless on the bosom of her father.

The mystery was quickly cleared up; and before Ellice awakened to the reality of existence, the major was satisfied, that whatever he might have to object against our poor hero on other grounds, he was innocent of all that had been charged upon him with respect to Rose Weston.

What followed may be, or rather, must be conceived by the reader, who, possessing the right end of the clue, may unravel it himself sooner than it was achieved by the party assembled. They had many cross threads to combine, and many knots to untie, which afforded equal surprise, but not equal satisfaction, to all parties.

Poor Mrs Weston saw that her daughter had been the dupe of an impostor; a villain—who "could smile, and smile,"—had systematically planned her ruin, and would have transferred the disgrace of it to another. She felt every hope abandon her; and shed bitter tears over the fate of her deserted and beloved child. The major in vain assured her of his determination more strongly than ever to see justice done to her, and to avenge, if not repair, her wrongs.

She was robbed of all the consolation derived from the illusion—that prudential motives alone had occasioned the mysterious conduct of her seducer. Instead of seeking the means of redeeming the effects of an imprudent passion, it was clear that this wretched young man had systematically planned the seduction, and only sought the means of evading the consequences of it.—The case was hopeless; the remedy, if now within her

reach, would be scarcely less ruinous to her daughter's peace than the evil inflicted by the only hand that could offer it. Although she could not declare young Wettenhall—for she had never heard his name—to be the culprit, the previous suspicions of Major Irwin, before they fell, by a strange combination of circumstances, upon Pen Owen—immediately suggested that he only could be the man; and his indignation was of course not diminished by the designs so providently counteracted by our hero—upon his own daughter.

As it is vain longer to conceal what had been so long and so artfully covered by the consummate hypocrisy of the hopeful heir of Oldysleigh—namely, the real character of that young gentleman—it may be necessary, even for the reader's satisfaction, to lay open certain parts of his conduct which may yet have escaped his penetration: and to afford some further necessary knowledge respecting his birth, parentage, and education.

Mr Fownes Wettenhall, whose son was next in the entail of the Oldysworth property, had been, in early life, placed, through the interest of his connexions, in a rising situation under government, and had, before he was thirty, arrived at the head of a board, equally respectable and profitable; but an insatiable thirst of money, united to a very small proportion of probity or principle, induced certain acts—which *he* deeming to be venial errors, whilst his employers called them, in plain English, gross peculations, he was dismissed with disgrace.

He retreated to a small paternal inheritance in Warwickshire, where for several years his time was chiefly occupied in writing the most obsequious letters to ministers, imploring their leniency, and calling upon them to white-wash him, (that I believe is the technical term;) to many of which he received no answers, and to the few which were noticed, a direct and unequivocal negative.

Disappointed beyond measure—as he had not very indirectly, at the same time, offered his services in securing a ministerial preponderance in a neighbouring borough, as the price of his restoration—he intuitively, as it were, felt a call—not for methodism—but for patriotism; the suddenness of his conversion, however, making the one no unapt type of the other. I have reason to believe, that those who heard this eloquent gentleman enlarge, at all public meetings from that period of his life, upon the profligacy and corruption of government, were generally of opinion, that he always spoke as if he were truly “master of his subject;”—and the able manner in which he has been in the habit of filling the chair, upon every question of reform, is a sufficient proof to his friends of the injustice of government for turning him out of a situation, which, no doubt, he would have

continued to fill, with equal profit to himself and those connected with him.

This worthy patriot had early become a widower, and one only son was left to engage the cares, and occupy the affections which extended beyond the range of his own selfish passions.

Mrs Wettenhall, although a collateral branch of the Oldysleigh family, was almost a stranger to those who were in possession ; and it was not until Sir Luke Oldysworth, finding that the property would pass into another branch in default of heirs, that any communication was opened between the two families. We have seen how averse the baronet was to come into close contact with the heir-presumptive, until considerations connected with the dignity and interests of the family, impelled him to it.

Under this view of the case, the elder Wettenhall, whose advances towards Sir Luke had never been met with cordiality, entertained the prudent suspicion, that the baronet might yet marry, and exclude his son from the inheritance. Such a man would necessarily arrange matters so as to have two strings to his bow ; and if his son should not come to a fortune ready made, he must be supplied with the readiest means of making one for himself.

The boy, therefore, had been placed in the office of an attorney in Birmingham, several years before Sir Luke had made up his mind to declare his intentions to the father, and pave the way for the reception of his heir at Oldysleigh Grange. When that important communication, however, was made, young Wettenhall was entered at Cambridge, whither a tutor of his own selection accompanied him, in order to qualify him for his new rank and approaching honours.

This tutor was no other than the reverend Mr Martin Loup, whom the reader may recollect, in the capacity of domestic chaplain to Sir Luke. The worthy priest, willingly transferred his allegiance from the existing head of the family, to the rising hope of it ; and secured his interests effectually, by transferring that minute knowledge, which his peculiar vocation had enabled him to obtain, of every shade of character, prejudice, and failing, which marked the individuals of the Oldysleigh junto, to the *porte feuille* of his apt, and really accomplished pupil.

Inheriting the beauty of his mother, who was a distinguished toast in her day, and aided by a natural grace and ease of manner, which his early initiation into society, through the means of his father's multiplied sources of intrigue, had cultivated, he had learned to adapt himself to various characters, and to be, in the worst sense, all things to all men. In the attorney's office, he had learned a more dexterous use of his weapons, and could

at will reason like a Machiavel—act the Tartuffe—or put Tom Paine himself to the blush.

Such was the accomplished Mr Francis Wettenhall, when he attended the summons of Sir Luke Oldysworth. He quickly perceived that Pen Owen, the only individual of whose character his tutor was unable to supply the materials, and which, indeed, might have puzzled a more honest and able scrutineer, was the very reverse of himself, and that he would require peculiar, and extraordinary management—with the other members of the Oldysleigh party he intuitively saw what was to be done with them.

To undermine the character of our hero, was among his first schemes, and the cold calculation of interests, no less than the incitements of passion, led to the ruin of poor Rose Weston. His success in this diabolical intrigue, we may trace from the first suggestion of the imputed crime, occasioned by his leaving an open note, addressed to him as Pen Owen, *by accident* on Sir Luke's breakfast table, and the subsequent disappearance of Mrs Weston and her daughter, which he contrived should tally as nearly as possible with the departure of Pen Owen from Oldysleigh.

On Ellice Craig his designs were of a different nature, or rather were derived from a different motive, for he had really fallen desperately in love with her person and accomplishments, that is, he was charmed with her beauty, and resolved to possess himself of her, *coute qui coute*. We have seen how he was caught, like many of his cunning precursors, in his own snare, and how the victim was rescued, just as she was about to be immolated to his base purposes. His proposal of pursuing her was to withdraw Pen from the protection of his friends, and the rashness and intemperance of our hero afforded every facility that he could possibly desire to his design of keeping them estranged from him. He had the art of undermining his character, and colouring his follies so as to appear his advocate, whilst he was betraying him to destruction. He defended him boldly against charges mysteriously implied, and with reluctance disclosed partial details, for the purpose of leaving his friends to draw the stronger inferences.

He early discovered the retreat of Major Irwin, and assailed poor Ellice on the side on which she was most vulnerable. He overpowered her with notes and demands for a private interview. He endeavoured to assume an authority over her, from the possession of her secret attachment to Pen Owen. He laboured to instil into her mind doubts, respecting the identity of Major Irwin. He swore to die if she rejected his love. All this was ineffectual. She had no confidant but her father, and to him all these communications were referred.

At length, recollecting the scene which had passed the morning previous to her elopement, he gave her to understand that the life of Pen Owen alone could atone for the insult he had incurred in her cause; and here, indeed, he evinced his penetration. She answered him—implored him to give up all thoughts of revenge—and—promised to hold herself his debtor.

A private interview was the condition on his part; in which he assured her he could afford her information respecting Pen, which he deemed it necessary to her honour, no less than to his safety, to communicate. She hesitated—she would have consulted her father, yet dreaded to be refused. Her apprehensions were awakened. She knew not what she did, and, against her better judgment, consented to receive him for five minutes in presence of her maid, on an evening when she knew her father was engaged to dine abroad.

It was the day on which Major Irwin had appointed to dine with our hero at a coffee-house, whose acquaintance he was anxious to cultivate, as we have seen, in order to probe his character, and to learn if it were really calculated to make his daughter happy.

Wettenhall, who never lost sight of the parties, foresaw the frustration of all his plans if this intimacy were suffered to continue uninterrupted. He, therefore, dispatched a porter with the mysterious note which the reader will recollect was delivered to our hero at the dinner-table. He had sent the man (who was in his regular pay) from a public-house in the neighbourhood of Major Irwin's house, where he was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the note to fix the hour of meeting with Ellice.

Although Pen had no clue to ascertain the messenger, accident had directed his steps rightly in the first instance, and when he had left the more crowded streets, the figure of a man running at some distance before him encouraged him to follow.

He suddenly lost sight of the object of his pursuit, for he had *dived* into the house of assignation in the immediate vicinity of Major Irwin's residence. Wettenhall having received his account of the pursuit, and dreading the *rencontre*, left the field open for Pen, whom Ellice's maid mistook, in the obscurity of the night, for his rival.

The strange scene in which our hero was thereby involved, will be recollected by the reader; and the train of errors into which he was subsequently hurried, contributed in no small degree to give effect to the plans of Wettenhall.

He found it necessary, however, to reconcile himself to our hero, whose volatile and uncertain conduct was likely to baffle a mere common system of *espionage*. As a friend, he perceived

the advantage that a sober calculation of consequences would have over the thoughtless and hasty determinations of his rival; and we have seen enough of his success in the progress of his manœuvres, to appreciate the deep sagacity which induced this well-digested policy. Still Pen Owen was too impracticable, and too regardless of consequences, either to be drilled by arguments into measures he disapproved, or diverted from those he had resolved upon, by motives of prudence or discretion.

The duel was one of those unlooked-for occurrences in the fortunes of a general, which at once decide the fate of a campaign. Could Wettenhall have prevailed upon him to fly the country, he doubted not he should have been able to effect an eternal breach between him and his friends; and it was his obstinacy upon this head that drove his treacherous adviser to take measures which his prudence and policy would otherwise have rejected. It is thus that cunning and knavery so often overreach themselves.

When, to his extreme horror and surprise, Pen Owen was pointed out to him by Major Irwin at the window of Mrs Weston's lodgings, he, without being master of all the circumstances, saw that prompt measures were necessary to secure his absence from the scene of action; and upon his subsequent visit to that good woman, he easily drew the whole story from her, and lost not a moment in making his arrangements for that purpose. He foresaw that Major Irwin was on the point of unravelling the mystery in which he had studiously enveloped the story of the unfortunate Rose Weston, of whose connexion with the major's confidential servant he had not been previously aware. Delay would, therefore, be as fatal to his schemes upon Ellice Irwin, as to his machinations against the man whom he considered as his rival in her affections.

In the course of the day he learned from the major his intention of demanding a full explanation on the morrow from Mrs Weston, and he arranged so as to secure the daughter when he should leave her in the carriage. His plan was to await his arrival at Mrs Weston's, and when he was safely lodged, to proceed in the manner we have seen. The effect of the forged note seemed to crown his designs with complete success.

His next step was to communicate with Pen's landlady, in whose hands he placed one of the placards offering a large reward for the apprehension of John Brown, who, he assured her, was her identical lodger. Measures were accordingly taken for his capture, and Wettenhall felt secure of time being thus gained for the execution of his whole combined measures. He had, at the same time, in order to make "assurance doubly sure," directed the person who had appeared as a money-lender,

but was, in fact, a creature of his own, to follow his intended victim, and if he should be liberated by a premature discovery of his real name and character, to arrest him on the spot for the sum advanced, and immediately to convey him to some lock-up house, from which he calculated he could not find the means of extricating himself in time to interfere with his projects.

This plan failed, as we have seen, owing to our hero's sudden resolution of going to Mrs Weston's lodgings, in order to confront the major. The myrmidons of Mrs Grub not being prepared for so early a start, were not at hand to secure him.

The real party of runners, who had tracked him on the previous evening to Mrs Weston's, in the mean time seized upon their prey, and the landlady, to her utter surprise, was arrested at the same moment, for harbouring so suspicious a character.

Wettenhall, equally surprised and disappointed at finding Pen on the spot to attempt a rescue in the moment of his supposed incarceration, and at the probability of all errors being cleared up by an examination before a body of men over whom he could have no influence, determined—after lodging poor Ellice in the secluded house he had taken for the occasion, under the safe custody of one of his chief agents—to carry his stronger expedients into immediate effect.

He hastily summoned two persons who were in the confidence of his father and himself, and directed them to lay an instant information before the secretary of state, charging our hero with treasonable designs, offering, at the same time, to appear in order to make good their allegations against him.

These men arrived at the secretary of state's office a few minutes after Pen had left it upon his discharge from custody, and his steps were easily traced by what had occurred between the officer and the hackney coachman. A warrant was immediately made out for his reapprehension; but the informers were detained in custody by the direction of Lord Killcullane, who thought he perceived something sinister in the manner and mode in which their depositions had been given in.

The subsequent mistake of the officer entrusted with the warrant for Pen's apprehension, not only baffled the deep-laid scheme, but, as if Providence had interfered, to return "the poisoned chalice" to the lips of him who had prepared the ingredients for another's destruction, delayed the execution of his plans, so as to frustrate them altogether.

Old Wettenhall, who had organized an insurrection of the radicals in the country, had, upon information being given against him, been brought up to town a few hours previous to these events; and the messenger who traced his son to Oldysleigh, was the more strongly confirmed in his error, by thinking

he had discovered in the supposed Pen Owen an *alias* for one of the Warwickshire conspirators.

Upon his arrival in town, Wettenhall was committed to close custody, and his agents who had been employed to lodge the information against our hero, well knowing how little prepared they were for a too strict examination into their own conduct, availed themselves of the occasion to turn evidence against both the Wettenhalls, and to lay open all their designs against the government.

The young man had, indeed, been diverted from his habitual intrigues, in some degree, by what he considered of infinitely more importance than the reform of government—namely, the prosecution of his own plans, and the gratification of his own appetites. Still he had maintained a regular communication with his father, and had too far committed himself with the corresponding cabals in London, to escape the general danger, which, upon a development of their plans, must inevitably be incurred by all the radical leaders.

Before his arrival, therefore, in the custody of the messenger, a warrant had actually been issued for his apprehension; and when he appeared under a supposed misnomer, he was recognized as a delinquent, and immediately committed. In the mean time, Lord Killcullane had found out Pen Owen, and communicated to him what had passed, informing him that the two men who had turned king's evidence had given sufficient information upon the subject to release him altogether from even a suspicion of being concerned in the conspiracy laid to his charge.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that Wettenhall was the respondent of all poor Pen's mysterious advertisements, as well as his correspondent, whenever a correspondent was necessary for the furtherance of his plan, with the exception, however, of the reproachful letter supposed to have come from Ellice Craig on the evening of our hero's pugilistic exhibition, which she had so inopportunately witnessed. This was, in fact, written by the wretched Rose Weston, who was the companion of Ellice in the carriage, as we have already learned, and delivered by the no less wounded mother, who had traced Wettenhall to Bury Street, and ascertained the lodgings to be those of Mr Pen Owen.

Having thus acquitted ourselves of the tedious, but necessary duty, of accounting for what might otherwise appear unaccountable, we return to the more agreeable part of our office, to watch the dispersion of the clouds which have too long obscured the happiness of those who are more deserving our attention, and to rescue our hero, if it be possible, from the consequences of his impetuous and irregular habits.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It is natural to suppose that Ellice Irwin was not long in persuading her father to a reconciliation with her calumniated and unfortunate lover; and it may as naturally be inferred, that the attendance of the apothecary was no longer considered necessary, after she had presented herself to our hero with a smiling countenance of pardon and conciliation, hand in hand with her father. Every mystery was quickly solved, and every ambiguity cleared up.

The major found, and admitted, that all Pen's errors and excesses had been on the side of virtue, but took occasion to remark—for the happiness of his daughter was deeply involved in the question—that so nearly do all excesses of intemperance approximate, in their ultimate consequences, from whatever source derived, that it is difficult for the world to discriminate or decide upon their origin; that the passions confound all things and all essences; and when once unduly excited, leave us as little masters of our actions as the man who is utterly devoid of principle altogether.

Pen acknowledged, in humble contrition, that he had been the ingenious artificer of his own misfortunes, and that his follies had betrayed him into snares which a little coolness and foresight might certainly have taught him to avoid. He received the prize of his repentance, and was only deterred from running into some new extravagance in the expression of his joy, by an observation from the major—qualified, however, by a smile,—“that he feared it would require a longer course of discipline to render him a fit depository for the cares and concerns, not to speak of the happiness, of another partner—in so tottering a firm.”

Perhaps the major did not illustrate or enforce his admonitions and suggestions in the most exemplary manner, when the conversation turned upon the conduct of Wettenhall, and the measures necessary to be taken with respect to his treachery towards poor Rose Weston; and his example, rather than his precept, appeared to influence Pen, when he vehemently swore to “wash out the disgrace in the villain's blood, if he refused to make the only reparation now in his power, for the injury he had inflicted upon the unhappy girl!”

Ellice Irwin, whose conduct was a living commentary upon the virtues she professed, would have smiled at the consistency equally conspicuous in her father and her lover, if other considerations had not induced her seriously and solemnly to protest

against any violent or intemperate proceedings, referring them to the legitimate authority of Sir Luke, which was more likely to prevail with a man of Wettenhall's character than any presumed right to commit the crime of shedding man's blood, upon the self-created claim of being the champions of virtue.

Pen thought it due to his uncle, to lose no time in clearing himself from the imputations which he now first discovered lay upon his character. He, therefore, the moment he was permitted to hold a pen, dispatched as plain and intelligible an account of all that had passed, as he could arrange, to the capacity of Caleb; requesting him to abstain from any abrupt communication of this unpleasant information to Sir Luke, or rather to defer it altogether until he had an opportunity of consulting Mr Mapletoft, on the best manner of breaking it to him.

It has already been observed, that Lord Killcullane sought out our hero, in order to set his mind at rest upon a question with which it had never been incommoded, namely, his intended arrest; and Pen, who had now retired to his old lodgings, in Bury Street, received his lordship with every acknowledgment of the interest and kindness he had evinced towards one, who felt how little he merited it at his hands. He learned from his lordship for the first time this fresh trait of Wettenhall's villany, and the manner in which that unprincipled young man had fallen into the snare prepared for another.

The return of the express which he had dispatched to his uncle Caleb, brought him the sincere and affectionate congratulations of the worthy Mapletoft and his wife, upon the evidence of his innocence, now so unequivocally established. The intelligence was broken by degrees to Sir Luke Oldysworth, who had not yet recovered from this bitter disappointment, and frustration of all his hopes. He sincerely congratulated himself, however, upon having escaped the trap laid by Wettenhall to make himself master of his untailed property, which was the real motive of his last hasty, and to him fatal journey to Oldysleigh.

This young man had so insinuated himself into the favour and confidence of the baronet, that he doubted not his influence to carry this point; nor of his being, by these means, enabled to leave England before the report of his conduct should reach the ears of his credulous benefactor. But it was ordered otherwise; and the presence of Mapletoft delayed the execution of the plan, which the still more inopportune intrusion of the officers of justice utterly baffled.

Pen Owen, left for a few hours to his reflections, sat near his window, ruminating upon the strange events which had been

crowded into the short period of his independent existence, and on the prospect of happiness now before him as the storm cleared away. He could not, however, anticipate the realization of his own happiness, without reverting to those of the kind being to whom he stood so much indebted.

Wettenhall was in the hands of justice, and his fate uncertain. He was, at all events, now out of the reach of any measures he might have contemplated in order to compel him to his duty respecting the Westons. In the event of his being found guilty, all hope of redeeming the love-sick girl was at an end; if acquitted, he still doubted whether her happiness was likely to be secured by a union with such a man. In either case, he trembled to reflect upon the consequences to so frail and fragile a victim to indiscreet passion.

In the midst of these ruminations, his attention was attracted by a crowd of people gradually accumulating round a very elevated lamp-post, which had been erected during his absence, in front of an opposite house. Several workmen were employed in some preparation, the nature of which he could not well comprehend, and he approached the window, in order to watch their movements and satisfy his curiosity.

He had scarcely advanced two steps before he experienced a shock, and was nearly struck down by the shattering report of something like the explosion of a thunderbolt. The glass shivered about his ears, and it was some moments before he could sufficiently account for these extraordinary effects.

Loud screams and exclamations of horror issued from the house where the preparations he had advanced to witness, on the opposite side of the way, had been carrying on. He perceived volumes of smoke rolling from the upper windows, the frames of which had been forced into the street, and several persons within, running to and fro in a state of disorder and distraction.

It was not in the nature of Pen to be an idle spectator in any scene, much less in one where he for a moment could consider his services of any possible use.

He ran down stairs, and was in a few seconds through the crowd, which had now increased to a mob, and in the apartment which had awakened his interest. Here he beheld indeed a chaos, from which a better ordered mind than his would have found it difficult to draw any immediate inference. Fragments of glass and copper, of which just enough was left to show that they had once been globes, cylinders, and tubes, lay confusedly scattered, in every direction, about a room not much larger than a closet. An atmosphere impregnated with stench that was scarcely endurable by the most hardened olfactories, and to

which two or three enterprizing and intruding individuals like himself appeared to have fallen victims, as they lay strewed among broken stools or chairs, still left standing around the wreck; added to this, the smoke or vapour which had not yet escaped through the broken windows, prevented our hero, who stood aghast at the door, from penetrating into the mysteries of the extraordinary scene before him.

At length a woman, who seemed more interested than the rest, coming forth from an inner room, half suffocated by the steams which issued around her, and wholly inflamed by her rage, roared aloud for assistance: "Get the ingins, and get out o' my 'ouse, ye wagabones all. A'n't it enow to have my 'ouse flammegastered, and about my hears, and my poor dear 'usband blown to the devil, without your cummin to make things worse, and raising a ugh and cry about my permises. Get along you—Bess, what d'ye stand shivering and slammocking there, when one ould fool's dying, and the devil 'as carried away t'other?—Why feckens, if the floor bayn't given vay!"

The last clause was the only one that seemed to attract the attention of her auditors. This was no sooner uttered, however, than the whole party took the alarm, rushing to the door, and bearing, perhaps, a more than usual weight upon the narrow staircase, a loud crack confirmed the retiring party in their fears, and realized, in some measure, a danger which was before only chimerical; for, being now rendered desperate, the more enterprising leapt over the ballusters, and in their efforts broke them down, and brought after them all whose temerity or caution had laid hold upon them as their guide and prop.

In the midst of the screams and groans which issued from the staircase, Pen, whom no experience of past indiscretions could deter from the gratification of his curiosity, and, let me add, the better motive of volunteering his assistance, in vain endeavoured to extract something from the voluble lady, who evidently was the queen of the ruins which she bestrode. She was impenetrable to his appeals, and only insisted upon his "raggamuffin companions."

When, however, he heard her vociferate for a doctor, and hence inferring that some person had been wounded or injured, as she herself appeared sound—certainly in wind, and apparently in limb—he advanced towards the door, through which she at first had made her appearance. "Art thee a doctor or potecary-man?" demanded the amazon.

Pen, who could never tell an untruth, even to carry higher points, would not condescend to one on such an occasion; but continuing to advance, she rudely seized his arm, and insisted upon his "woiding her premises," or she would send "for one

as should makè him." Pen was in general very chary of the fair sex; but a groan from the inner room induced him to overstep the usual bounds prescribed by decorum upon such occasions, and very dexterously extricating his arm from her grasp, and as dexterously turning her, with infinite gentleness however, over his left leg, he dropped her safely on the ground, whipped into the room, and turned the key upon her.

He approached a bed, across which lay a man, with an oil-skin cap strained on his head, and sleeves of the same material over those of his shirt, his face partly covered with a blanket, and the whole apparently much scorched and inflamed. Pen approached him, and demanded in a voice of sympathy, if he felt himself seriously injured.

"Blown up!" groaned the patient.

"Good Heaven, sir, where are you wounded?"

Before an answer could be returned, the enraged landlady, whose hands and lungs were pretty equally exercised on the outside of the door, vowed every species of vengeance which the law allowed, or forbade, upon the head of our hero. He condescended to a parley through the keyhole, entreated her to come to terms, asserted the danger of neglecting the suffering patient, and—the only clause in the terms of capitulation which appeared to be worthy of notice—pledged a high bribe, if she would send for medical aid, for which he would be responsible in the article of payment.

The war trumpet ceased, and the gates were opened, with a declaration on her part, "that now she believed he was a gemman, as he behaved himself as a gemman ought; thof he mought as well not have demeaned himself, by lifting his 'and agen a defenceless creatur of the weaker sect!" Every apology was given and received necessary to restore order, and she departed to obtain the necessary succour.

Pen now began again to address the wounded man, and lifting one of his hands, in order to feel the pulse, heard his own name uttered, in something between a sigh and a groan. "Do you know me then, sir?" demanded he of his patient.

"No bless you, that warn't I!"—Pen stared, and looked about him, and concluded it was an illusion. "Where," continued he, where are your pains?"

"All over."

"Pen Owen!" was again distinctly uttered, in a faint and languid tone of voice.

"Who is that?" exclaimed our hero, starting up.

"The devil ha'n't a fetched him then, as Madge said," groaned the man on the bed.

"Who are you speaking of?" cried Pen, searching round the

little room, which was crowded with the odds and ends of what had been furniture—and with jars, tin cans, and stone bottles, which occupied every interval left by it. Stooping at length to look under the bed, he observed on the further side something that resembled a human form; and, regardless of the other wounded man, he wrenched the bed from its situation, and extricated from a heap of nondescript drapery, consisting of baize curtains, foul linen, and wearing apparel, the scorched and singed effigies of what once was—GRIFFITH OWEN—no less a man than father to our hero himself, and the very pink of projectors!

Had Pen been aware how little real injury had been sustained by his ingenious parent, it is possible his risible faculties might have been excited by the ridiculous circumstances of his situation; as it was, he felt no sentiment but that of excruciating anxiety, at the doubtful appearance of the being to whom he owed his existence.

He lifted him in his arms, and though he was not able, like the pious Eneas, to bear him from the flames, (which unfortunately raged *within*,) he did his best to extricate him from the ruins, which no “dire Ulysses nor fraudulent Sinon,” but his own skill and ingenuity, had brought about his ears!

The fresh air, and the timely interference of a medical man, who now made his appearance, soon restored him to his perfect senses, *at least* to the *status quo ante bellum*.

His first exclamation was to curse the stupidity of his fellow-labourer, “for closing the *stopcock* at the moment it ought to have been opened.”

“You cried out, ‘Stop cock;’” grumbled the wounded tyro on the bed.

“To be sure I did—to open it.”

“You said, Stop!”

“Stopcock, I said.”

“Well—and I did stop, cock.”

“You should have turned it.”

“I did turn it.”

“Zounds, you turned it the wrong way!”

“You said, Stop cock.”

“What then?—blockhead!”

“I did stop, cock.”

Pen foreseeing no end to a discussion, in which the first terms of the argument were so little understood, interfered to postpone it, at least, to a more suitable occasion.

The poor underling was more seriously injured, and Pen—before his father was sufficiently recovered to be removed to the lodging opposite—had taken upon him to remunerate the land-

lady for the wounds of every description, inflicted upon her household gods—her husband and furniture, inclusive.

When our hero had fairly housed his parent in his own domicile, he naturally began to enquire into the occasion of the accident, and the history of his unexpected return from the continent. But although the digression, and speculative turn of the communication, might command the dutiful attention of a son, it would, I fear, be borne with some impatience, by an ordinary reader. It may be fair, however, to state generally, that it included at least a century of new projects; and that the late experiment—the failure of which he attributed wholly to the awkwardness of his coadjutor, a journeyman druggist, on whom he speculated as a promising chemist—had been taken up on a sudden, upon perceiving parts of London lighted with gas, in the mode of which he thought he could make some considerable improvements. His object was to ignite the gas without the apparatus or interference of a lamplighter, which he scientifically demonstrated to his son might be effected, in spite of the late explosion, and its consequent failure.

He had left France, (having been previously honoured with the diploma of corresponding member of the Institute,) full of a scheme for converting the soil of the London slaughter-houses into pure indigo, when passing over Westminster Bridge, on his return to London, the gas lights first struck him, and his rapid imagination flying off at a tangent, in a moment suggested the ingenious improvement, the result of which we have just witnessed.

Pen did his utmost to console his father under his present disappointment, and having already sufficient business upon his hands, proposed that he should immediately set off for Gloucestershire, whither he would follow him as speedily as possible. His late failure, or probably the want of some immediate project to fill up the void left by it, induced Griffith to listen to the proposition; and having been induced to take some measure suggested by the apothecary, to alleviate the pains, and mollify the bruises he had incurred by the accident, it was arranged, that on the following morning he should begin his journey westward.

Pen, now satisfied with having performed his duty as a son, felt himself at liberty to pursue his own objects; among the first of which, it may readily be presumed, was a visit to the major and his lovely daughter, from whom he had been absent—the reader will scarcely believe it—several hours.

Having related all that had occurred in the interval to his attentive and interested auditors, he again resumed the conversation respecting the unfortunate Rose Weston.

After much discussion, and the rejection of several schemes,

it was resolved that the mother should by degrees inform her daughter of the real state of the case; and, by an appeal to her sense of religion, and to her own dignity, induce her to shake off the chains of a man, whom to connect herself with further, would tend only to degrade and render her situation desperate. But before they could take the necessary measures to carry their plan into effect, a circumstance arose to turn their speculations into a new channel.

We left Griffith Owen covered with unguents and plasters—and, it may be presumed, from the known experience of the attendant apothecary, carefully supplied with sedatives, if not direct narcotics—reposing in Pen's bed, which he had resigned to him. The old gentleman had, however, scarcely composed himself, when he was roused by a violent altercation between two persons evidently ascending the staircase—a discordant duetto between a counter-tenor and a running bass.

"You said," roared the latter, "that Mr Owen was at home—and I must see him."

"I said he was at home, but was not to be disturbed," squealed the soprano.

"Stand out of my way, woman—if I die for it, I must see him,"—was all that Griffith heard, when the door of the chamber burst open, and the strange voice challenged the disturbed projector by a demand, "whether he was disposed to hear reason—or at once sacrifice the life of one or both to his vengeance?"

Griffith started up in the bed; but the room having been carefully darkened, in order to favour his repose, he could only discover the figure of a man, relieved by the light of the open door behind him. He was too much astonished to return an immediate answer—and was, moreover, busily speculating upon the nature of the demand—which delay not agreeing with the evident precipitancy of the querist, the question was again repeated, with the addition, that "his pistols were ready loaded, and that the decision of Mr Owen must be prompt, for that there was but a moment for the alternative." Saying which, he drew a brace of formidable weapons from under his coat, and again demanded—"peace or war?"

"It is useless," continued he in a tone of strong agitation, "to enter into any explanation—the time is past—disguise is at an end—I am a villain—admitted—you wish for my life—take it—it is fairly forfeited to you—I would have ruined you—I failed—you are the winner—I am lost for ever—but if you prefer to be a man of humanity to what is called a man of honour, I may yet redeem the innocent, and do justice to one who can receive justice at no other hand."

"Why, who the devil are you?" exclaimed Griffith, who now

found words and a pause to utter them ; “you wouldn’t shoot me in this condition ?”

“Who—who are *you* ?” exclaimed the stranger, retreating in surprise and disappointment.

“Tell me first, sir,” cried Griffith, “what business you have here.”

“I came to see Mr Owen, sir,” retorted the other.

“I am Mr Owen.”

“How is this ?—I come to claim”——

“You can have no claim upon me, sir,” sputtered the angry Welshman.

“I know nothing of you, sir,” replied the other, interrupting him ; “where—where is Mr Pen Owen ?—the woman, confound her, told me he was at home. I am lost past redemption !”

“Here he is !” exclaimed Pen, who heard the question vociferated as he ascended the stairs—having returned for some papers for the major ; “who is it that asks the question ?”

“Your bitterest foe,” was the answer.

“Wettenhall ?”

“The same—ready to adopt any alternative, so that it but quickly present itself. I come armed for my own sacrifice, if your justice demands it ;—it is for you to decide—but in a moment.”

“Stop, rash man,” exclaimed Pen ; “what is it you would propose ?”

“To surrender my life to you rather than to the laws of my country.”

“I am no murderer, sir,” returned Pen, with an air of contempt.

“You may be.”

“How ?”

“By refusing to hear a desperate man, whose life hangs upon the breath of your lips.”

“Explain yourself, sir.”

“It must be brief. The officers of justice, from whose hands I have escaped, are on the scent, and I am resolved not to be retaken alive. I am involved in conspiracies against the state, for which I destined *you* to be responsible.”

“Villain !” exclaimed our hero.

“Spare your reproaches.—Invective even cannot shake my purpose—I come to expiate my offence—and you may, if you choose, be my executioner ; but”——

“On, sir !” cried Pen.

“Ambition fired my soul—and I regarded you as an obstacle to it ;—I was your enemy ;—I would have destroyed you ;—my

schemes are frustrated—and I have not so far unmanned myself as to thirst wantonly for blood. I am accursed enough without that—nay, my accumulated guilt has brought down its own vengeance, and there is but one point on which I can make atonement—Rose Weston.”

“Ha!” exclaimed Pen Owen—“what of her?”

“I have been a villain to”——

“A villain indeed!”

“Spare me yet a moment. I would do her justice. Upon this condition I am content to live.”

“What mean you?” cried Pen.

“That if she will condescend to share my fortunes in a strange land, I”——

“Will marry her?”

“In your hands is my fate, sir—use it with more discretion and humanity than I meditated to do, when I thought yours in mine.”

“What is it you demand of me?”

“The interference of an honest man between a villain and his hopeless destiny!”

“You desire that I should propose to the unfortunate victim”——

“Again, again I appeal to you to spare me: I am scarcely master of myself. Do not goad me on to desperation. Speak!—ay or no decides my fate beyond the power of recall.”

“I am not to be intimidated by this bravado,” cried Pen, piqued at what he thought an improper threat.

“Then despair be my portion!” exclaimed the infatuated Wettenhall, raising a pistol to his head, which, as Pen suddenly rushed forward, and struck from its direction, discharged its contents full upon the bed in which poor Griffith Owen lay, listening in astonishment to the extraordinary conversation which was taking place. He darted from between the sheets, fortunately without a wound, and rushing upon Wettenhall, seized him by the collar, demanding in words scarcely articulate, whether the villain was come to murder father and son at one blow.

There is no saying to what extremity a desperate being like Wettenhall might have been driven by such an attack in such a moment, had not our hero, who, like most heroes—or we should have no occasion to talk about them—possessed both presence of mind and activity of body, sufficient to restrain either party from proceeding to extremities. He delicately, but promptly withdrew the passionate Griffith from his hold upon Wettenhall’s neckcloth; and at the same time placed himself in such a position, as to ward off any attempt at retaliation on the part of his younger antagonist.

He prevailed, after some friendly altercation, upon his father to retreat to his bed, and pointing to the door of the next room, followed Wettenhall into it. His resentment subsided as he viewed the state of this young man's mind. He saw he was in earnest, and laboured to reason him into a sense of his situation, and the increased enormity he was thus rashly about to incur.

This produced little effect—nothing short of a pledge from Pen to become his advocate with Rose Weston, would reconcile him to life.

Nothing—not even the extremity to which he saw his former rival reduced—could induce Pen to promise any thing further than to state his proposals to the unfortunate mother—to advocate his cause he owned was impossible.

Terms upon this basis were at length agreed upon, and Wettenhall was to give our hero information of his abode, from the first foreign port he could make, should he be able ultimately to elude the vigilance of the police.

Pen, after having appeased his father, who was outrageous at the thought of being shot in his bed, without knowing why or wherefore, when he had challenged death in so many other forms *en philosophe*, lost not a moment in returning to relate the curious scene in which he had just been involved, to the major and his daughter.

After much discussion, it was agreed that the communication should be made first to the mother; and if she thought, in the desperate state of her daughter's mind, the almost as desperate expedient should be resorted to, such precautionary steps might be taken as were necessary gradually to disclose the state of the case to the unfortunate girl herself.

The major and Pen, accordingly, proceeded to Mrs Weston's lodgings, which had been hired by the former in the immediate neighbourhood of his own house.

The good woman received the communication with a mixed sentiment, in which affection for her daughter and apprehensions for her life, conflicting with her detestation of the baseness and hypocrisy of her seducer, rendered it almost impossible for her to come to any definite decision.

Pen thought the severe retribution which his crimes had brought down upon his head, might lead, in so young a man, to a profitable repentance, and expressed his determination to use all his influence with Mr Mapletoft and Sir Luke, to make him such a pecuniary allowance as might take from him any temptation to resume his former courses. The major coincided in this mode of proceeding, especially as the relative connexion between the baronet and his heir was still unbroken, however it might hereafter be affected by a sentence of outlawry, should justice

be roused to punish, with its full vigour, his meditated crimes against government.

He despaired, however, of any real conversion, as his vices appeared to proceed, not from any excess of his passions, but from a rooted and obvious contempt of all moral principle. He had no glass in which to reflect the enormity of his transgressions. He had no fund upon which to draw for principles to give a new impulse to his conduct. He had not perverted virtuous sentiments, but was habitually grounded in those of an opposite tendency.

It was at all events hazardous ; and he could not encourage any hope of such a man being able to contribute to the peace and happiness of an artless girl—an alien from her friends and her country. The poor mother could not, however, altogether lose sight of the possible alternative. The case appeared hopeless : but the life of her child might be saved ; and this was a powerful consideration with the unhappy widow.

The major did not, could not attempt to reason with her feelings. He still thought, that although it might be unnecessary to detail the whole of Wettenhall's duplicity and villainy, such parts as related to his connexion with the Westons themselves, should be unreservedly opened to the poor girl. She ought not, he observed, to be cajoled into a connexion thus problematical in its results, without being so far acquainted with her future husband's character, as to enable her to form a judgment herself of what might ultimately contribute to colour her destiny.

In order to avoid any thing which might give too sudden a shock to her feelings, it was arranged that Mrs Weston should, by degrees, inform her daughter of what was absolutely necessary to be known ; and at first, by distant hints and allusions, give birth to suspicions which might be afterwards rather softened than exaggerated. This plan was accordingly adopted.

Whether the imagination of the suffering victim of her seducer's arts was too vivid, or the precautions of the poor mother were not sufficiently guarded, it is difficult to determine ; but a messenger, dispatched in haste to Major Irwin and our hero, early in the morning succeeding that in which the foregoing consultation had taken place, demanded their immediate attendance at Mrs Weston's lodgings. They obeyed the summons without hesitation, and meeting the poor woman in the outer room, anxiously enquired what had occurred to occasion so sudden a message.

Wringing her hands, and in a state of bitter agony, she informed them that she verily believed she had killed her child—that though she had proceeded with the utmost caution to open the subject to her, she had at once taken the alarm—she would

not be persuaded but that he was dead ; and that the major had thus verified his threats against him. "She," continued the poor woman, "refuses to hear any explanation—she interrupts me if I attempt to speak, and incessantly weeps his loss, as if he actually lay a corpse before her."

The major looked at our hero, whilst he took Mrs Weston's hand, as if about to lead her into her daughter's apartment. Pen observed, that under the existing impression, the major's presence might have too powerful an effect upon the poor girl ; but that, perhaps, *he* might be able to lead the conversation, so as to excite her attention, and bring home the necessary conviction to her mind. The major, assenting to this opinion, took his seat, and dismissed Mrs Weston and Pen into the adjoining room.

The latter was deeply struck with the appearance of the unhappy Rose. She sat, as usual, in an arm chair, supported by a pillow, on which her head reclined. Her beautiful hair hung in profusion about her shoulders, and her eyes, fixed and immoveable, seemed not to notice his entrance. He approached her, and gently taking one of her hands, which hung carelessly over the arm of the chair, he, in the softest tone, enquired after her health. She then turned her eyes upon him, and seeming to scan every feature, with a deep sigh abruptly snatched from him the hand he had taken ; and crossing it with the other upon her breast, scarcely articulated so as to be heard by Pen—"No ! no !—*He* is not here !"

"No, my dear Miss Weston, *he* is not here ; but he is well."

"Are you a deceiver too, sir ?" cried Rose, turning upon him with a look that went to his heart.

"On my soul I am not !—he lives, be assured."

"And how shall I be assured ?"

"By one who never yet deceived woman !"

"And yet *he* even deceived me," sighed she, bursting into tears.

"And still you love him, Rose ?"

"Who shall deny me that comfort ?—he can harm no one now."

"He lives, Rose—indeed he lives, to atone for his"—

"Crimes !" screamed the bewildered Rose. "Ay, ay, so mamma told me, of crimes—crimes !—Oh, wicked, wicked Major Irwin !—who charged him till you threatened ?"

"You would not be unjust, Rose—Major Irwin has been your best, your warmest friend."

"Indeed, indeed he has !" cried she through her tears ; "but he did not love poor Pen Owen !"

"You are in an error—indeed, indeed, you are—we wish to clear all up for your satisfaction."

"What satisfaction can I have, now that he is gone ?"

"He is gone, only for you to follow him : on you alone, my sweet Rose, it depends to join him—on"—

"I am ready, sir—my business in this world is past and done."

"Nay, nay, do not misunderstand me—he is only gone abroad, and there will await you—he has offended against the laws, and cannot return to this country at present—he"—

"Who is his accuser, sir?" demanded the poor girl, rising, and assuming an air of dignity.

"None of *your* friends, be assured," replied Pen, in a subdued tone of tenderness. "If you will be calm, I will endeavour to explain every thing to your satisfaction."

She was silent, and resuming her seat, fixed her eyes upon our hero's face, as if to ascertain his sincerity.—He proceeded to state, that her lover having, in his mistaken zeal, adventured too far in some political cabals, had incurred the censure of government, and been compelled for the present to seek refuge in a foreign land.

She anxiously listened, without interrupting his narrative, and Pen, inferring from this awakened state of her attention, that the fairest opportunity presented itself of opening to her such parts of her seducer's history as were immediately connected with her own—he proceeded, in the most cautious manner, to trace it out from the moment of his first interview with her. Her eye became more animated and distended as he advanced. He hinted at the assumption of a name not his own. He repented it, for her eye fell :—he paused—she again looked up ; but with a countenance of woe, that effectually checked his proceeding.—"Go on, sir," she faintly whispered.

"Nay," answered Pen, "it is better perhaps to postpone any further conversation for the present ; you are weak, you had better take some repose, and I"—

"Repose, sir," cried she, with a more than usually reproachful expression of countenance. "Repose, sir, when you have robbed me of it **FOR EVER**."

"Oh, say not so, Rose—I would console, I would—I come to make you happy, if you will hear me out."

She paused, and seemed to be contending with some internal emotion—when suddenly turning to Pen, with a convulsed lip, she appeared to check herself, and then, in a half-suppressed voice, said—"He then was a deceiver from the beginning."

"Let us," cried Pen, in the tone of consolation—"let us look to brighter prospects."

"I do," cried she, with a firm voice, lifting up her streaming eyes towards heaven ;—then retiring within herself, she seemed to be wholly absorbed in her own reflections.—A glowing flush spread over her pale cheek as she laid her hand upon that of

Pen, which rested on the arm of her chair.—She raised her eyes towards her weeping mother : “ Do not weep for *him*, mamma.”

“ I weep for you, my child,” sobbed the wretched woman.

“ Nay, do not, mamma—you see I do not weep for myself—and yet I am very, very weak ;” then turning to Pen, she seemed to tax her utmost powers of exertion to say something, which, however, died away upon her lips. She struggled for utterance—the effort was at length successful. With an eye that spoke the resignation of every earthly hope, and with a catching breath—pressing the hand which trembled with emotion beneath her own—she whispered, “ Poor Rose then was the victim of premeditated perfidy !—what a fallen creature am I !”

She seemed exhausted by the effort, and gently laid her head back on the pillow.

Pen cast an eye upon the widow, whilst a tear of sympathy beamed in it, as he signed to her to be silent, lest her daughter might be interrupted in her reverie, from which he hoped she might derive strength of mind sufficient to listen with some composure to the alternatives he now prepared himself to lay before her. There was a long pause—poor Rose sighed—Pen’s looks were directed towards the hand which still rested on his own. He marked a slight convulsion. He felt it.—He looked up, but her face was turned from him.—He was suddenly assailed by an apprehension he dared not embody, much less utter.

“ Gracious God !” exclaimed Mrs Weston, rushing towards the chair.

“ What, what !” falteringly exclaimed Pen, holding up his other hand to arrest her progress.

“ She is dead—she is dead !” screamed the mother, and fell senseless at the feet of her child.

The child heeded her not—answered her not.—Her spirit had indeed sunk under the conflict—and had for ever flown !

Pen sat immovable : he dared not withdraw the hand now grasped in his.—He felt he had murdered the being he came to save.—It was despair—but it was passionless. He did not even turn his eyes towards her—he saw not her mother at his feet.—Her hand grew colder and colder—his heart grew chiller and chiller—and the world and existence seemed to be retreating before him.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

It was long before the mind of our hero recovered its natural tone, or could revert without agony to the circumstance of poor Rose Weston's death, with the occasion of which he charged himself, in having too abruptly entered upon the history of her seducer.

The fact however is, that nature was exhausted ; and life hung by a thread, which the least emotion was sufficient to sever. Her medical attendant assured Pen, that he had hourly anticipated her dissolution from his first being called in to attend her.

Poor Rose !—fare thee well !—may thy virtues and thy sufferings plead with the Father of Mercies, and may they be permitted to cancel the one fatal error of thy otherwise pure life !

It may be supposed that some time elapsed before things were restored to their natural order, upon which this sad event had so deeply broken in. It was indeed many days before any arrangements were even proposed for the general congress of friends at Oldysleigh, which had been so sanguinely anticipated by the several parties. Griffith Owen had left town according to the original plan ; and at length a day was fixed for the journey.

Mrs Weston was already settled in the major's town house, until she should be sufficiently recovered to return to the country ; and her brother was left as a companion, to provide every thing that could tend to console, or at least alleviate her sufferings, under the heavy dispensation which had fallen upon her.

Pen was admitted to a third seat in the major's travelling-carriage, and I have never been able to ascertain, whether the dislocation of Ellice Irwin's band-boxes, dressing-cases, work-bags, reticules, &c. &c. &c., which the intrusion of a bodkin necessarily occasioned, or whether the cramped situation of our hero, who was constantly inconveniencing himself, that he might not increase this derangement, by fidgeting and shifting his position, was considered by either party as more than equivalent to the juxtaposition, which had been so long supposed to be the object of both.

They were, however, silent on this head ; but the opinion of Major Irwin may in some measure be collected from his observing, when stretching his legs during the change of horses at Salt Hill, that “if his travelling companions increased upon him at this rate, he should in the end be obliged to build a coach.” The only remarkable circumstance on the occasion is,

that Pen did not feel this to be a reflection upon his independence, or resent the observation as implying a disposition on his part to intrude.

As the party carried their whole fund of interest and amusement with them, they did not pass their time in counting the mile-stones or seeking adventures—consequently nothing extraordinary occurred, as is generally the case with travellers in history—and always with travellers in romance. Of course, it is not in my power to make the journey so pleasant to the reader as I have serious reasons to believe it proved to the parties themselves, who expressed their astonishment when they found themselves in the old avenue leading up to Oldysleigh Grange. I am equally incapable of entering into a detail of all that was said or that passed, when the besiegers and the besieged came to close quarters—much less the various emotions which displayed themselves upon the occasion, according to the several temperaments and habits of the united group.

Joy and grief equally find vent at the eyes, and I can assure my sentimental readers, that from one or other of these causes, or a mixture of both, there was not a thoroughly dry eye to be found in the saloon at Oldysleigh Grange, for full five minutes after the contents of the travelling-carriage had been fairly emptied into it. I am ashamed to say, uncle Caleb was the most childish simpleton of the group—and was caught, more than once, after every other individual of the party had decently pocketed his or her handkerchief, with his eyes swoln like a great schoolboy—gazing on our vagabond hero, and squeezing his hand, which had unresistingly been retained in his, when he placed himself on the sofa beside him.

After that pause—which will occur even among the most eloquent, and more especially after a string of questions, among all querists, and no respondents, each claiming to be first heard—Pen asked his uncle why his father was not in the circle.

“In the where?” demanded good Caleb.

“In the room,” answered Pen.

“Did my poor brother come with you, then?”

“With us!—no, my dear sir, you know he came down a fortnight ago.”

“A fortnight ago! Bless you, my dear boy, I haven’t set eyes on him since—since, let me see—since the oyster speculation. Poor fellow, it cost me, first and last, a hundred and fifty-seven pounds, ten shillings, and two pence, as per account; but what of that, it’s a very innocent amusement, I dare say. I only wish it were a little more profitable.”

“But, my dear uncle, I saw him enter the Bristol mail at the Gloster coffee-house.”

"A fortnight ago, yesterday!" added the major with an air of surprise.

"He has never been here," said Mr Mapletoft.

"It is very strange," observed his wife.

"Unaccountable," rejoined Pen.

"It's being unaccountable is more in character with a speculating philosopher," said the vicar.

"Don't say any thing against him," cried Caleb with a beseeching look. "I hope he has come to no harm."

"Heaven avert it!" sighed Pen, who had him at the moment in his mind's eye, covered with the wreck of his experiment in Bury Street, and half smothered amid the incongruous contents of an old clothesman's bag, and the spoils of an exploded laboratory.

The conversation dropped when dinner was announced, which being discussed in silence, or with only a few desultory observations, whilst the servants remained in the room, subjects of higher interest, out of which a variety of necessary explanations arose, occupied the remainder of the evening; and, with a few drawbacks from melancholy retrospects, there was not, perhaps, in the whole county of Gloucester, a more contented or happy set of beings, if we except, which we must do, the unfortunate master of the house.

He had entered at first into all the variety of interests which had been brought upon the tapis; the very smiles which surrounded him inspired a sympathy, and the restoration of his original favourite, Pen, to general favour, was a source of real satisfaction to him. But the severe blow inflicted by the conduct and exposure of Wettenhall, and the misery of feeling that, to him, must descend the ancient and hitherto unspotted name of Oldysworth, with the noble property attached to it, wounded the baronet in the tenderest point. It was a case without remedy, unless the crimes of the young man should draw down upon him the full vengeance of the law—an event very unlikely in the present day, when the laws, even of treason, are so sparingly and so jealously resorted to. Besides, he still would be attainted as the heir of Oldysleigh, and the blot would remain on the family escutcheon, which—even in his better regulated state of mind—the good baronet could not but consider as an evil of portentous magnitude.

The next morning, after a sleepless night passed in turning this perplexing subject over in his mind, he determined to call in to his aid the old standing council of Oldysleigh; and having requested the party to adjourn from the breakfast-parlour to the library, Sir Luke resolved fairly to lay his case and his perplexities before them.

Just, however, as they were proceeding to open the cabinet, Caleb's servant presented him with a letter, telling him it had been brought by a man who appeared to be very much agitated as well as fatigued—having walked all the way from Portsmouth, and solemnly pledged himself to deliver it into his own hands.

Caleb, looking at the address, cried out with a smile of pleasure, "From my poor brother Griffith!" and feeling for his spectacles—which were not to be found—he gave the letter to his nephew, desiring him to read it aloud, adding, "You have younger eyes, Pen."

Pen, having broken the seal, began accordingly :—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I always find it difficult to convey in set terms, to a mind habitually revolving in a circle, the motives by which a man of genius is led to strike out new lights and explore untrodden paths"—

"I don't understand a word of all that," observed Caleb, interrupting the reader: "where does he date his letter from, Pen?"

His nephew turned over the sheet, and, casting his eye upon the bottom of the fourth side, answered—"the Comet."

"The Comet!" exclaimed Caleb, looking aghast.

"Off the Lizard," added Pen, scarcely less surprised.

"The vermin!" cried Caleb, renewing the groan uttered at the first part of the intelligence.

"That," said the major, "is evidently the bearing of the vessel," thinking to set poor Caleb right.

"Ay, ay, Major Irwin, you don't know my poor brother so well as I do. How should you? But these were the ruin of him before—vessels full of large spiders—and snakes—and things with fangs and tails, cost the Lord knows what; though, for that matter, I know well enough what myself—for I paid for them all; and when, poor fellow, every thing was sold off, the auctioneer had the impudence to tell him to his face—they were not worth a brass doit."

"He writes," said Pen, taking his uncle's hand, "from on board the Comet."

"Don't repeat it, Pen; you shouldn't expose your poor father's weakness; how is he—with all his wit and his ologies to boot—to get there, I should like to know? The last time he was half crazy, and now he's downright mad. Poor Griffith!"

"You don't understand your nephew, sir," said Mapletoft.

"Ay, may be, may be—I don't know much of these matters; but I can't forget that I paid no less than seventy-five pounds, some odd shillings, besides the booking and carriage, to some

man in St Paul's Churchyard, London, for a large box of brass and glass; and when poor Griffith put the odds and ends together, he did not speak to me for three weeks, because I wouldn't believe him when he swore that he had brought this confounded comet—heaven forgive me—into his garret window."

"But this is a ship, my dear uncle," said Pen smiling.

"What of that?" retorted Caleb with some quickness; "can he sail in a ship to the moon, which is much about the same latitude as the comet, I suppose?"

"He is on board some ship, evidently," said Sir Luke; "he will perhaps tell us where he is going if you suffer your nephew to proceed."

"How can he be on board ship?" replied Caleb. "Didn't you yourself tell me," asked he, turning to Pen, "you saw him safe lodged in the mail?"

"Yes, my dear uncle; but that was more than a fortnight ago."

"True! Then the Lord knows where he may have been since."

"Let us see," said Pen, as he resumed the letter:

"The road to fortune is opened to me by one of those extraordinary freaks which would have eluded your vision, brother Caleb, because it did not approach exactly in the right line."

"I wonder what line it is!" cried Caleb, looking up.

"It presented itself to my view at Devizes; so, leaving the mail with the blind goddess"—

"Where?—who?" exclaimed Caleb. "You read too fast, Pen. I can't, for the life of me, follow you. He left the mail—who did he leave it with?"

"With the blind goddess."

"A blind bargain, as usual, I don't doubt. But who may she be?"

"He means Fortune, sir," replied Pen smiling.

"A fortune! Ay, Griffith, Griffith—he has found to his cost all is not gold that glitters. I hope she may not turn out a jilt."

"As she has often proved to be," smiled Mapletot.

"You know her, then," cried Caleb, touching the vicar's arm.

"Only by report. Go on, Pen—let us learn where she is leading him."

Pen proceeded—"So leaving the mail with the blind goddess, who appeared to have regained her sight, and to see her road as clearly as you might, Caleb, when it lay straight before you in broad sunshine, I crossed the country to Portsmouth, where, equipping myself for my voyage—purchasing farm stock, live and dead—household goods and stores, I"—

"Mercy on me!" exclaimed Caleb; "where, in the name of wonder, did he get all his money?"

Pen continued;—"In which I was ably advised, and assisted by the companions of my adventure."

"Oh!" said Caleb, with a look of satisfaction.

"Go on, Pen," cried Sir Luke.

"—By the companions of my adventure, and which you, my dear Caleb, will have the satisfaction to see, by the accounts which I have directed to be forwarded to you without delay, are, as I am informed by those who understand these matters—which I do not profess—five and twenty *per cent* under the market price, provided *you* make prompt payment."

"Prompt payment! why, he hasn't left the bills for me to pay."

"It should appear so," observed Sir Luke.

"Why, what has become of the lady with her fortune—his"——

"You had better hear the whole, and the worst at once," said Mapletoft, who really felt for the good old gentleman, thus rendered liable for the debts of a mad speculator.

Pen persevered in his task:—

"We set sail on Wednesday last; but having met with baffling winds, we have been beating about Channel, without advancing on our voyage to this New Eldorado!"

"Hell what?" exclaimed Caleb. "Is that another outlandish name for his comet?"

"I see," observed Mapletoft, "the whole scheme. He has been induced to embark with a company of speculating democrats, who, being unable to submit their independence to the tyrannical restraints of the British government, are transporting their property to the back settlements of America, there to drain morasses, and cultivate the Rights of Man, amid scalping knives and tomahawks."

"My poor father!" sighed our hero.

"It's the Irish mine over again!" cried Caleb.

"We shall never have done with this letter," observed the baronet, impatiently. "Let us hear it through, without interruption. We shall have time enough to comment upon it afterwards. I have much, and important matter, upon which I wish to consult you, my good friends, this morning."

"Go on," said the vicar. Pen obeyed.

"Racked with *ennui*, at this sickening delay in my pursuits, I would have prevailed upon the captain to set about a steaming apparatus, which might easily have been achieved, by some artists from Plymouth. Nay, I offered to be at half the expense, which would have turned out a good safe speculation for you, Caleb."

"I positively will have nothing to do with it," exclaimed "Caleb. "I"——

"Nor would the captain," answered Pen, who ran on a few lines further. "Just as I had cast up, for the twentieth time, the final profits of 10,000 acres at the end of ten years, and was forced to resort to my fingers to make out the sum total—a deep sigh, or rather groan, reached my ears, and, looking up, I observed at a few paces from me on the deck, a sailor, who, with folded arms, appeared to be gazing on vacancy."

"An adventure!" said Mrs Mapletoft.

"A speculation!" whispered her husband.

"A fudge and nonsense!" cried the baronet—whose patience seemed almost exhausted.

"There does not appear to be much more," observed Pen, as Sir Luke seemed disposed to leave his chair. Pen read on.

"There must be something more in this, said I to myself, than meets the ear. The man appeared to be above his situation. I saw at once there was some mystery about him: I studied his features as he stood. His countenance became familiar to me. I felt conscious of having seen him, or some one resembling him before. I paused for recollection—at once it came upon me—he was the image of Sir Luke. It was himself, some twenty, or five-and-twenty years younger!"

"What!" exclaimed the baronet—"read that again."

"Nay, nay, Sir Luke," said Mapletoft; "let him rather read on."

"At once," continued Pen, reading in a hurried tone, "it flashed upon me that Sir Luke had lost a son many years ago; and I felt assured it must be *he*!"

"Gracious powers!" exclaimed Sir Luke, throwing himself back in his chair.

"Hold, my dear sir," cried the vicar, hastening towards the baronet; "be assured it is some idle speculation—it cannot be, you know."

"Nothing else, depend upon it," added Caleb.

"Why do you not read on?" asked Mrs Mapletoft.

"In mercy proceed," cried Sir Luke, in a faltering voice.

"Give me the paper, my dear Pen," said Mapletoft, evidently labouring to suppress his own agitation. "Allow me to cast my eye over it first."

"Would you murder me, Mapletoft?" demanded the impatient baronet; "let me know all—all—and in a breath."

"Be calm, then."

Mapletoft proceeded:—"At length, fully satisfied in my own mind of the fact, I simply asked the man if his name was George? He started, and answered in the affirmative. The case was decided."

"It is my son!" sobbed out Sir Luke.

"Do not—do not trust yourself with the fallacious hope, my dear Sir Luke."

"Would you drive me back to despair?"

"Nay, nay, you have incontestable proofs of his loss."

"Here is proof of his existence," shouted the half-frantic baronet.

"Would he—could he have been silent for so many years, when he knew that a word would have restored him and yourself to happiness?"

"He knew no such thing, Mr Mapletoft," continued the baronet. "He could know no such thing. Who was to tell him that this unnatural, hard-hearted, proud, obdurate father, who drove him and his innocent wife to hopeless despair—who forbade him his house—drove him from his heart—cursed him! Oh! Father of mercies!" cried the baronet, dropping from his chair on his knees, "spare my senses, whilst I await my doom."

"It is too much," exclaimed Major Irwin; "his mind will sink under the conflict."

"Spare yourself, my good friend," said Mapletoft, "in pity to your friends, as to yourself."

"Think, my dear Sir Luke, of the bitter tears of regret you have shed—the years you have mourned," cried Mrs Mapletoft, who with Miss Irwin, had aided to replace him in his chair; and who each had retained a hand, as they wept in sympathy over the suffering old man.

"Nature cannot sustain the shock," whispered the major "What's to be done?"

"I fear the worst," replied Mapletoft.

"If it were to prove"—

"It is the disappointment, I dread." In the mean time Mapletoft ran over the remaining paragraphs of the letter, in which it was evident that the writer had hurried to his conclusions, without having ascertained a single fact. He had, however, promised to make the man's fortune, had purchased his discharge from the vessel, and actually made him the bearer of the letter.

"Keep nothing from me, for pity's sake," cried the baronet, upon seeing Mapletoft fold up the letter.

"There is only"—

"No matter what—I am prepared—I must—I will—I insist upon knowing the whole."

"Grieved am I to say," returned the vicar, again unfolding the letter, "there appears no better foundation for our hope, than"—

"Than what?"

"The imagination of Mr Owen."

"Then am I lost indeed," groaned the baronet. "Cruel, cruel man, to trifle with a father's feelings!"

"It was my fault!" cried Caleb sobbing. "What business had I showing a madman's letters!"

"No, Caleb," said Sir Luke, smiling through his tears, "*you* would not harm your enemy, if you had one!"

"The man is here," added Mapletoft.

"Here!" exclaimed the baronet; "let me see him instantly—without delay. I will not be contradicted—ring, Pen—ring."

"Allow me, my good sir, at least to see him first," said the vicar, gently endeavouring to reseate the baronet in the chair, from which he had risen.

"Be it so, my kind, best of friends;—but as you value my life—my senses—do it speedily; and yet if"——

"Be calm," cried Mapletoft, with a more firm and grave air which, from habit, produced its desired effect upon the impassioned old man. "Look up to that Power which, tempering the wind to the shorn flock, can alone afford you strength to bear the weight of either alternative!"

"I am humbled to the dust, and bow to the will of Heaven," answered Sir Luke, as his head fell upon his breast.

Major Irwin, who appeared to take his full share in the agitation and confusion that prevailed around him, rose from his chair as Mapletoft was leaving the room, as if to follow him; but suddenly returning, took his station on the seat which the vicar had just left, near the baronet.

Pen, however, had darted after the vicar.

A pause of some moments ensued. Sir Luke was still supported by Ellice and Mrs Mapletoft. Caleb stood aloof, benevolently eyeing the object of his sincere sympathy; for Caleb was never wrong when his feelings only were concerned. He would not have broken the sacredness of the silence even by a sigh. If you had asked him *why*, he could not have told you.

The major appeared to have less refined notions—at least a less sensitive intuition on this head; for he observed, gently indeed, and with a look that evinced any thing but hardness of feeling—"that he much feared the result of the examination would prove fruitless."

Mrs Mapletoft thought the major decidedly wrong in disturbing the calm which her husband, who was her oracle, had effected in the baronet's mind. Ellice only felt, that *perhaps* her father was *not quite right*; but neither of them spoke.

"Do you think," continued he, addressing the baronet, who had raised his head at the sound of his voice—"do you feel that you have strength of mind to bear the shock?"

"I am prepared to meet the worst," sighed Sir Luke.

"I mean, even should it prove favourable."

"We had better not say any thing more," said Mrs Mapletoft in a low tone, "till—till Mr Mapletoft returns."

"Pardon me, my kind friend," answered the major: "I have been bred in the school of adversity, and have some experience in the treatment of an anguished mind."

"Have you too been unfortunate?" cried Sir Luke, who before seemed to have been subdued by the vicar's parting words.

"Deeply so," answered the major, with a look that vividly illustrated his words.

"And yet *you* have not the life of a child to account for to Heaven," sighed the baronet, whose wounds were again opened: "*you* have recovered one," gently pressing the hand of Ellice, which was still locked in his.

"I have perhaps, sir," returned the major, "to atone for conduct less pardonable in the eye of Heaven."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the baronet. "Can there be a crime more unnatural"——

"Infinitely!"

"And you are guilty"——

Ellice shuddered.

"Perhaps."

"Of what?"

"It must not be," replied the major, with a countenance of fearful agitation, and inexplicable to those around him. "I think there are footsteps in the passage—perhaps even now. Are you prepared for their—their report?"

"I trust," falteringly returned Sir Luke, "I trust in Heaven I am," as his eyes followed the direction of his thoughts.

"It may be favourable," observed the major, as the slow foot-fall of persons approaching the door was heard. "Could you survive the sight"——

"Of what?" cried the baronet, staring wildly towards the door.

"Of your son!"

"It would bless—it would"——

"Then God be thanked I AM NO PARRICIDE!" exclaimed the major, as he fell senseless at the feet of the baronet.

The blank and disappointed countenances of our hero and Mapletoft, as they slowly opened the door at the moment of this catastrophe, were suddenly expanded with horror and amazement at the inexplicable scene now opened to their view.

Sir Luke had fallen back in his chair, without apparent life or motion—the major lay extended on the floor—one hand only having caught and rested itself on the knee of the baronet—Ellice, on her knees, was vainly endeavouring to raise her parent's

head, at the same time that her little strength was expending itself in screaming hysterically for aid. Mrs Mapletoft was in a situation of scarcely less distraction, tearing off the baronet's neckcloth, and calling in vain to Caleb to ring the bell, who ran from one end of the apartment to another, looking for that which the agitation and confusion of his mind had left him without the power of seeking in the only place in which it was to be found.

In an instant the more efficient members flew to the aid of the sufferers. The servants were summoned, and the baronet and his new-found son borne off to their several beds, whilst the usual restoratives were resorted to, until medical assistance, which was sent for express, should arrive.

In a few hours the several sufferers were not only restored to their senses, but to the most exquisite perception of the sources of happiness opened, without exception or drawback, to the whole of the parties assembled. It was indeed some time before uncle Caleb could be made perfectly to comprehend how a man, whose face he recollected Pen had compared to a brown baked pie-crust, and had, in consequence, been transferred to his duodecimo of memorabilia, could possibly be the being of whom he had heard the most pathetic descriptions for years past, as a fine blooming, curly-headed lad, full of life, vivacity and activity. He was, however, at length convinced of the fact by nurse Hester, who authenticated a mulberry on the major's left arm, which, when it was duly displayed before all whom it concerned, betrayed the original texture of the skin, and forced Caleb to admit that it was almost as white as the face of Ellice, when she witnessed the terrible conflict of nature in the late disclosure of her beloved father's birth.

When we say that the worthy baronet recovered from the first shock of this disclosure, we need scarcely add, that his happiness was complete, and his gratitude to Heaven unbounded. We are to recollect that it was not the simple recovery of a lost son, but a relief from a burden and obligation which must have embittered every future moment of his existence, and which wounded him in the nicest point of his most incurable prejudices. He had not only thrown off a positive evil, but found, in the remedy, the choicest gift that Providence could bestow to gild the evening of his life.

The reader is already acquainted with the history of George Oldysworth, who, as Major Irwin, had simply omitted, in his narrative at the vicarage, the circumstances which would have at once betrayed him to those from whom he still deemed it necessary to withhold the secret of his life. He was determined never to reveal himself to his father, if he found that the old

gentleman's heart were still hardened against him. He was ignorant of all that had passed since the death of his elder brother—the account of which had only reached him a few years before, and with the particulars and consequences of which he was altogether unacquainted.

It was not possible for him to make any direct enquiries upon such topics, without incurring suspicion of his motive, as they must necessarily be made on the spot. He possessed not a friend in England; for both the father and mother of his unfortunate wife had been for some years dead, and the family dispersed, as they had married off, and settled in different parts of the country.

His first object, indeed, was the recovery, or rather the attempt to ascertain the existence of his child; but, as we have seen, in the prosecution of his enquiries he found young Wettenhall not only received as the heir of Oldysleigh, but, as it appeared in fact, and from every report that reached him, rooted and established in the affections of Sir Luke. His own name appeared to be “as if it had never been,” and the memory even of such a being to have faded from the mind of his father like a dream.

No enquiry had ever reached him—the vacancy he had made seemed to be filled up, and his return neither to be hoped nor thought of. Of the change in Sir Luke's character and economy, he had no means of judging; for he had resolved to avoid all intercourse with his neighbours, as we have seen, in order that he might be more unfettered and independent in the main object of his research.

In this state of things he resolved, at all events, that Wettenhall, if a worthy and meritorious character, should suffer as little as possible, in the event of his resuming his station as son and heir of Sir Luke; for he was not so romantic, or so free from the hereditary pride of his family, as to divest himself of the right, or to delegate the duties of its legal and responsible representative to another. His own fortune, which was ample, he proposed to himself to bestow as an equivalent upon the disappointed heir-presumptive. He had therefore a double object in watching the conduct of the young man; and it is more than probable he might have been easily brought to concur in the wishes which he at first supposed to influence Wettenhall in a union with his daughter, had he not discovered her attachment to our hero at the very moment in which he began to doubt the integrity of his rival.

When, after the rapid series of events which had detained the major in London, and in the end placed the *dramatis personæ* in their true point of view, he accompanied his daughter and Pen Owen to the mansion-house of his father, all the feel-

ings he had so acutely suffered under for years recurred in their full force to his mind. He retrode the steps of his youth, reviewed the scenes of his childish pursuits, and sighed to find no one ready to welcome him to a long-lost home. He gazed on his father's countenance, and felt the same returning awe, which had never been softened by even periodical returns of affection. He almost trembled under the fear of reproof or reproach, as if he stood before him the culprit brought back immediately after his original delinquency. The intervening period seemed annihilated; and although the impulse of filial affection, which is never wholly lost, either by absence or even injustice, impelled him to throw himself upon his indulgence, he could not divest himself of that habitual dread which was identified with the very presence of his father. He watched the moments as they passed, in the hope that the disappointment experienced by the detection of Wettenhall would lead to the subject, or call forth some latent regret, if such really existed, in the breast of the baronet for the loss of his son. But it was no less the labour and solicitude of both Mapletoft and his wife, to keep the recollection as much as possible out of sight, and to prevent the scarcely cicatrized wound from being again rudely torn open, by any allusion or approach towards the subject.

Baffled in these attempts, George Oldysworth felt that it was necessary to take some decisive step, and, even at the risk of his feelings, to rescue his father from the supposed bondage, under which he too evidently writhed.

Before, however, he could come to any final determination, the sudden elucidation of Sir Luke's real feelings upon this interesting topic, occasioned by the absurd and abrupt speculation of Griffith Owen, burst upon him like a thunderbolt, and had nearly overwhelmed him. He felt that the moment for explanation was arrived; but dreaded, from the effects which now displayed themselves upon a supposed discovery, the consequences which might follow from too precipitate a disclosure of the real one. He was called upon at a moment's warning to decide upon his father's fate and his own; and the struggle was so powerful within him, that nature seemed ready to desert her post, at the very instant when her utmost vigour was necessary. He was about to follow Mapletoft out of the room, to consult him on the emergency. He looked upon his father, and thought that his life hung by a thread, which even his temporary absence might cut short. He had the remedy in his hands, but it was the cast of life and death. Nature resumed her post, and whispered that she alone could relieve him from the crisis. He took his resolution, and we have witnessed the consequences!

Not a cloud, not a murmur was to be seen or heard, when the grateful and enraptured circle were reassembled next morning at the breakfast table.

It appeared that the baronet, resolving to make some amends to Pen for the harshness and injustice with which he had been induced to treat him, had, since the discovery of Wettenhall's villany, sold the unentailed property, of which Wettenhall had been so anxious to become possessor, and repurchased, in the name of our hero, the long-regretted property of Cwm Owen, from the family of the Bristol trader, who had suffered the castle to lumber the land, merely because it would have cost more than the fee-simple to pull it down. Sir Luke, however, had restored a considerable portion of the original estate; and, before he had contemplated the possibility of his own heiress being united to our hero, and eventually representing the Oldysworths, he had fitted him to resume all the dignities, and all the consequence of "ALL THE OWENS."

The reader will easily imagine that no unnecessary delays or impediments occurred to retard the happiness of our hero and his Ellice, with three names. She was vested in full possession of a FOURTH in so short a time that I almost dread to offend the sensitive delicacy of some of my female readers, by descending to particulars.

As it is, however, now several years since that happy event took place; and as I have never heard of a cloudy day within the walls of Oldysleigh Grange from that period, we may safely infer that the over indulgence of friends, was productive of none of those consequences which premature marriages are sometimes said to entail.

A small annuity was settled upon Frank Wettenhall, upon the condition of his remaining abroad; and Major Oldysworth had even opened far more extensive prospects to his view, should his future conduct authorise those exertions in his favour: but as I have rarely found habitual depravity in youth, or vice founded in a soil where no good seeds had been previously scattered, to contain any materials for effectual reform, except under the talismanic influence of romance, I am compelled as a veritable historian, to record that this wretched young man having, to drown his remorse, associated himself with some *roués* of the Palais Royal, was killed in a duel, by a young French officer, whom he had stripped of his last louis at the gaming-table.

Griffith Owen, who, in about two years after his American emigration, had been landed at Bristol without a coat to his back or a sixpence in his pocket, was received, nevertheless, with open arms by his friends at Oldysleigh, when, after a due

consultation, it was resolved that he should be put in possession of the Cwm Owen property for his life, and be again the true representative of his "archite ancestor."

As I have not undertaken to write the memoirs of this gentleman, I am not called upon to say whether he lived happily and peaceably for the remainder of his days ; but as I am of opinion that the love of speculation is as incurable, if not as reprehensible, as other unrestrained tendencies of human frailty, I will not take upon me to aver or to deny that the father of our hero, might not still have terminated his career in a poor-house, had he not been, from time to time, relieved by the interposition of a very rich one.

Of Pen I would say little, as he has already said so much for himself ; but as I love to speculate *with moderation*, I should think under all the circumstances of his case, always premising our little friend Ellice to be a very principal ingredient in it, that he may turn out not only a tolerably agreeable character, but even a very good man. His disjointed education, and his unchecked impulses, over which no *regular* guard had been placed, would probably, had he remained an adventurer upon the world, have grown up into more serious irregularities, and, by habitual indulgence, have generated serious vices. He was not vicious, but might have become so, not from choice, but by accident. He might have grown familiar with error before he had known its character, and been involved in its consequences before he was aware he had incurred them. The most spirited horses may move gracefully under the rein of a skilful driver, but I need not say what would become of the horses, and whatever they carry with them, if left to prance, and curvet, and pursue their own unchecked career without any driver at all.

Discipline is nature's coachman—I beg pardon for the grossness of the figure ; but it is too appropriate to be blotted out. Pen had no vice, I repeat ; but, to carry on the metaphor, he was high mettled, unused to the curb, and rather given to bolt out of the course. He might have run riot till it had been too late to bring him to the curb. Some, indeed, say that the wildest colt may be tamed under the hand of a woman. Fortunately, this appears to have been the case with our hero. With a heart influenced by the social affections, warmed by a love of right, even when in pursuit of what is wrong, ardent, disinterested, and enthusiastic, it might, by mere juxtaposition, have degenerated into passion, prejudice and extravagance, but for the silken cord and silver bit by which her fair hand, though unseen, maintained her hold upon him.

Pen, however, could never have been utterly depraved. He had a heart, and he was a BELIEVER. In spite of the onc, he

might indeed have wandered a fearful distance from virtue ; but, with the latter, he could never have been hardened in vice.

Wettenhall had neither heart nor faith. The glory from above was shut out from him ; and he warred against society. There is no redeeming point, when the whole mass is occupied by SELF:—it is neither within, without, nor above. All is darkness—which spreads itself over the mind and excludes every ray that might reach it from Heaven, or be reflected from the better part of our species. Mercy is the only hope of such a being. We, indeed, may pity, but we dare not palliate guilt like his. Pen was weak enough to shed a tear over the fate of that miserable young man. He had shed many over his victim, poor Rose ! but none so bitter !

THE END.

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